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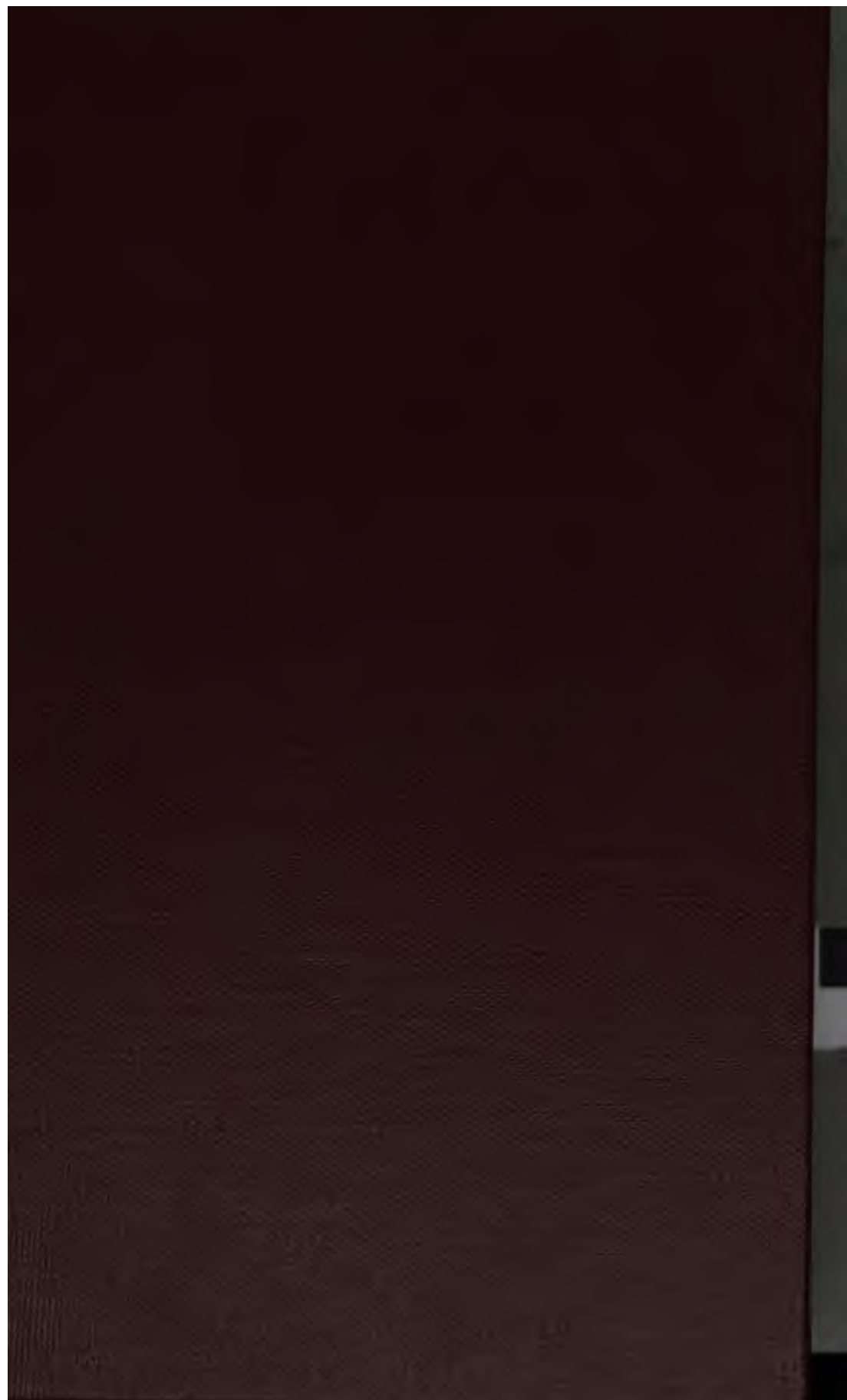
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THE WAR IN THE FAR EAST

BY THE MILITARY CORRE-
SPONDENT OF *THE TIMES*

Chas. Reilly, Esq.



H I M THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS II.

THE WAR IN THE FAR EAST

1904—1905

BY THE MILITARY CORRE-
SPONDENT OF *THE TIMES*

E. R. Sedgwick

WITH NUMEROUS MAPS AND PLANS BY PERCY FISHER

NEW YORK
E. P. DUTTON AND COMPANY

1905

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DEDICATED
TO
HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY
THE
EMPEROR OF JAPAN
TO WHOSE ILLUSTRIOUS VIRTUES
HIS STATESMEN, SOLDIERS AND SEAMEN
ASCRIBE THE MERITS
OF THEIR
GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS

PREFACE

WHEN it was suggested to the writer that he should republish the articles contributed to *The Times* during the course of the Russo-Japanese War, he had serious misgivings whether they were deserving of a longer lease of life than that contained within the twenty-four hours' span of existence of a daily paper. No one, at all events, who is aware of the conditions under which articles are customarily written for newspapers, no one who recalls the veil of secrecy and mystification held between us and the actors in the Far Eastern drama, will expect the awe-inspiring title of History to be prefixed to the following pages. We have too many great military historians as our models for any one of us to retain illusions concerning the sum of knowledge, judgment, and accuracy, not to speak of time, required for the proper treatment of the moving story of a great campaign.

But, on reviewing the whole series of articles and plans which now accompany them, with such partial impartiality as an author is capable of exercising towards his own handiwork, the writer thought, after eliminating a great deal no longer germane to the story, that he might be justified in offering the residue to the public as a preliminary study of the campaign, despite faults of which he is only too sensible. It was clear

that the campaign itself was of surpassing and, perhaps, lasting interest to the British people; and experience had shown us that official and wholly satisfactory accounts of a great war often found us old men before they saw the light, and that, when they did, other events had occurred, and interest had been diverted to some other stage and other players.

The writer also thought that an account of the campaign, written, as these pages have been written, from day to day, and thus preserving contemporary colour, warmth, and even partisanship, might serve as a useful reminder that those who direct armies and fleets have to deal with a number of factors of which history sometimes takes insufficient account, and that, in relation to the intentions and proceedings of the enemy, these leaders have largely to rely upon intuition and judgment, and have rarely before them all those nicely tabulated facts and certainties which are at the disposal of the ultimate historian when the latter distributes praise and blame. These pages, therefore, the writer hopes, may enable the reader to picture himself more nearly in the position of the leader in the field, than he can contrive to do when studying an historian, who surprises the secrets of the future by writing after it has passed, and knows beforehand the direction in which he is going and the catastrophe of the tale. By recognition, in this manner, of the dense fog which surrounds all war before the air is cleared by some terrific encounter, the public may be encouraged to realise the gravity of the problems confronting the higher command, and to extend to those who have, hereafter, to direct our armies and fleets in war, a large share of that inflexible confidence, loyalty, and sympathy which are such an inestimable

support in the day of trial to a leader of men when hard beset.

So far as circumstances and early publication permit, these articles have been revised, and such new matter has been introduced as we have hitherto been favoured with by the respective combatants. The chapters dealing with the battles of Liauyang and Mukden have been completely re-written, and free use has been made of articles contributed to *The Times* by correspondents in various parts of the world, notably those by the representative of this journal in Tokio, whose long experience of Japan has been of such profit to readers of *The Times* throughout the course of the war.

Most of these articles have been translated into Japanese by Mr. Mori and re-published in book form by the leading Japanese paper, the *Jiji-Shimpo*. The much too favourable reception they met with on the part of eminent officers of the Japanese Army and Navy has not been without influence in causing the publication of this book. The writer was fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Percy Fisher for the preparation of the maps and plans to accompany the text. The work they have entailed, owing to our scanty knowledge of the topography of the theatre of war, will appeal to all cartographers. Mr. Fisher returned from Japan last year, and has been engaged for many months upon the compilation of these plans from all available sources, and the writer hopes and believes that the result of these labours may be of serious service to those who have hitherto been without proper means for forming a balanced and impartial judgment upon the strategy and tactics of the campaign.

Every one whose duty it was to comment on these great events in the British press was bound, from first to last, to keep before his eyes the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902, and to write nothing which might directly or indirectly serve the cause of Russia or injure that of Japan. This circumstance has necessarily influenced and coloured many of the comments made upon the operations, and especially upon the leading figures who took part in them ; but if we could not back our friends when they were in difficulties, the value of friendship would become problematical. History will judge all these matters by a more impartial and impassive tribunal than any we can hope to establish while the clash of arms still resounds in our ears.

The writer's cordial thanks are due to *The Times* for the permission given to publish these articles, and to many members of the staff for invaluable assistance rendered during the course of the war ; to Mr. L. J. Maxse, for his authorisation to introduce a long extract from the *National Review* ; to Mr. Clement Shorter, of *The Sphere*, for his permission to make use of the portraits included in the book ; and, lastly, to Mr. John Murray and his assistants for the despatch with which this volume has been produced.

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THE WAR IN THE FAR EAST

INTRODUCTION¹

No great campaign fought out within the memory of this generation offers such a vast and fruitful field for study by men of the British race as the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5.

For the first time for nearly a hundred years we have seen an island Empire at grips with a first-rate continental Power. For the first time the new machinery with which science and modern invention have endowed the navies of the world has been put to the practical test of serious war. For the first time, almost, in the history of the world, we have seen naval and military forces, directed by master hands, co-operating in close and cordial fashion to impose, by their united efforts, the national will upon the enemy. The military power of the Island Empire has been revealed.

Innumerable questions relating to the conduct of war by land and sea which have divided opinion in the past have received definite answers from a tribunal to which all must incline—the bloody assize of war on the grandest scale. Even if there were no more lessons to be learnt, no more circumstances to be pondered, than those arising from the mere clash of arms on sea or land, the war would far exceed for us in didactic interest

¹ Reprinted from the Supplement to the *National Review* for September, 1904, by permission of the Editor, Mr. L. J. Maxse.

all those contests between continental armies which have taken place since the close of our great struggle with Napoleon.

But the purely military interest of this war on its technical side, important as it is, is not the greatest and most absorbing of the questions that arise in connection with it. The combatants themselves have become woven into the history of modern Britain in a peculiarly close and inextricable fashion. Russia for the last fifty years has been the terror of our statesmen and the nightmare of India. She has imposed upon us, as she has imposed upon Europe, by the menace of her weight. Her steady, stealthy advance across the wide continent of Asia has resembled the onward march of destiny, while the numbers of her population and the size and general inaccessibility of her territory to the blows of an enemy have impressed the imagination and dominated the intelligence of rulers and people of other lands. May we not say that our anxieties have been due, more than to any other cause, to our conscious knowledge that we have never been able to graft upon the stem of our vast and world-embracing Empire an intelligent system of Imperial defence, calculated to ensure the security of our dominions against all attack?

In any review of the history of our relations with the Russian Empire during the last sixty years one fact stands out in particular prominence. Not a single Tsar or statesman of Russia since the death of Nicholas I. has succeeded in grasping the elementary fact that England and Russia have need of each other in order to allow the full and peaceful development of their respective people and subject races. The whole course of Russian diplomacy within the memory of living man has been either openly or covertly hostile to our interests. If Russia still has friends in England—and her people have many—they promise to become a diminishing residuum unless the methods of Russian policy greatly change, for Russian diplomacy is calculated to tire out the patience of its best friends, amongst whom all

Englishmen might be reckoned if Russia were wisely ruled.

This fixed point of Russian antagonism to England, founded though it be on a misconception, due to the absence of all serious knowledge of statecraft among Russian rulers of modern times, and fostered though it has been by a long course of follies committed by statesmen of both countries, has been the prime determining cause of all, or nearly all, the present disasters of Russia. It is the price she has to pay for the misdirection of her foreign policy for over sixty years.

The firmest bond that unites England and Japan is mutual distrust of and antagonism to Russian policy—not the Russian people, that patient, silent mass of inarticulate humanity which arouses our constant sympathy. The agreement between England and Japan signed on January 30, 1902, which synthetised the whole situation, was a document which could not fail to remain before the eyes of every statesman and every publicist in this country so long as the war lasted. It has necessarily influenced and coloured all contemporary criticism upon even military events, and due account must be taken of the fact. At any hour of any day while the war continued, we might have become automatically involved in the struggle by reason of the participation of a third Power in the hostilities, a circumstance which was beyond our control to foresee or prevent. The preamble of this agreement affirmed that England and Japan were solely actuated by a desire to maintain the *status quo* and general peace in the Extreme East, and that we were both specially interested in maintaining the independence and territorial integrity of the empires of China and Korea, and in securing equal opportunities in these countries for the commerce and industry of all nations. We mutually recognised that it would be admissible for the contracting parties to take such measures as might be indispensable in order to safeguard these interests if they were

threatened by the aggressive action of any other Power, or by disturbances in China or Korea. If one of the contracting parties became involved in war in the defence of these interests, the other agreed to maintain a strict neutrality and to endeavour to prevent any other Power from joining in hostilities against its ally. Should, however, a third Power join in such hostilities, then the other contracting party was bound to come to the assistance of its ally, to conduct the war in common, and only to make peace by mutual agreement. This bond held good for five years from the date of signature, but, if either ally was engaged in war at such time, the alliance continued until peace was concluded.

Thus on the one side in the war we had a Power whose entire policy through a long series of years had been justly calculated to arouse the hostility of England, and on the other a young nation with whom we had contracted a fast alliance of the most binding and comprehensive character, so far as the affairs of the Far East were concerned. The terms of this treaty are recalled because the Anglo-Japanese agreement, from one end of the war to the other, remained the fundamental and dominating factor in the whole political and military situation; and we were absolutely bound, no matter what government might have been in office, to support the cause for which Japan had taken up arms.

Although America had not joined in this written bond, it is public knowledge that she was at one with England and Japan in the policy clearly enunciated by the agreement. England, America, and Japan stand for the open door and equal rights for the commerce of all nations in the Far East. As America was the first to arouse Japan from her long sleep and to lead her along the paths she has since trodden with such giant strides, so in every other country that borders the Pacific coast Americans display, and must continue increasingly to display, a lively and practical interest. The grand lines of American trade to-day run east and west rather than north and south, and America, even

less than ourselves, can afford to see the almost illimitable markets of China closed by falling under the influence of a group of Powers who desire to monopolise great areas of Chinese territory for their own exclusive benefit. On all counts, therefore, England and America were more deeply interested in this great quarrel than in any other campaign that had been fought by foreign nations within the memory of living man.

Although the negotiations between Russia and Japan which led up to the rupture of February last only began in July of the preceding year, we have to look much further back for the causes which tended to make the present war inevitable.

Without going deeply into the past, it is sufficient to recall that important landmark in the history of the Far East—the intervention of Russia, France, and Germany in 1894, which deprived Japan of the greater part of the fruits of her victories in the war with China. The Powers named intimated to Japan at the close of the war, in courteous but decided terms, that her presence in the Liautung Peninsula constituted a standing menace to the capital of China, and rendered the independence of Korea illusory.

Knowing their victim better, as these Powers do now, the effect of this ultimatum upon the proud spirit of the Japanese is probably more completely realised to-day than was the case at the time. Japan had thoughts of resistance even to this overwhelming combination arrayed against her. So deep was the resentment that a number of young officers at Port Arthur actually harboured the insane idea of gathering their men together and of marching across country upon Vladivostok, living on the country as they passed, in order to exact a military vengeance for the insult done their flag, or to perish in the attempt. They were dissuaded from their mad purpose, and, after much searching of heart, the Mikado's Government determined to submit to *force majeure*. The Imperial rescript of May 10, 1895, bearing the Mikado's sign-manual, and

were "yellow pagans," "monkeys with brains of birds," and were generally assorted with Khivans, Khirkiz, Bokhariots, Turcomans, and other tribes of Central Asia with whom Russia had come in contact in her facile progress eastward. To think that Japan was a serious foe, or would ever dare to challenge Russia to an armed conflict, was the very last idea that ever occurred to the vain and haughty rulers of the mighty Russian Empire.

When Japan became strong enough to risk the consequences of the *ultima ratio*, she endeavoured to recall Russia to a sense of her responsibilities.

Let us review, in the briefest outline, the history of Russia's proceedings in Manchuria. In the autumn of 1860 the allied forces of England and France were in occupation of Peking. The Russian Minister at this court, General Ignatieff, persuaded the Chinese that it was in his power to procure the speedy evacuation of the capital, and as the price of his good offices received the Maritime Province of Manchuria with 600 miles of coast and the harbour of Vladivostok. The next step was taken in 1896, when the Russo-Chinese Bank, an agency of the Russian Ministry of Finance, concluded an agreement with the Chinese Government for the formation of the "Eastern Chinese Railway Company," an undertaking with the ostensibly modest object of continuing the Trans-Siberian Railway by the shortest route through Chinese territory to Vladivostok. The scheme, however, soon expanded to much more formidable dimensions, and Russian engineers, with Russian troops to protect them, began to overrun Manchuria. In 1897 Germany seized Kiaochau as satisfaction for outrages committed by Chinese upon German missionaries, and in the same year Russia demanded permission to winter her fleet at Port Arthur. In due course the ships arrived, and shortly afterwards Russia obtained a lease of Port Arthur and Talienwan and authority to carry the Manchurian Railway down to Port Arthur. Upon our invertebrate action during this critical period

it is perhaps best to draw a veil. Russia had thus established herself in the very position from which she had ousted Japan, and though the Japanese were greatly incensed at this trickery they were not yet ready for war, and only took a modest share in the controversy which ensued.

By the end of 1898 there was a strong Russian garrison at Port Arthur, and the railway was also in military occupation. Japan held on her way, and even the endeavour of Russia to secure a lease of Masanpo, facing the straits of Korea, failed to draw her from her wise policy of restraint.

The great reactionary movement in Northern China in 1900 added fresh complications to a situation already full of difficulties. Nevertheless, at the close of the operations which they entailed upon the world, Japan gradually began to reassert her position both at Peking and at Seoul, and to place herself in frank opposition to the Russian pretence of acting as the protector of China. Her diplomatists became more active and their language more decided. China gradually began to see that her interests and those of Japan were identical.

The next point of collision between Japan and Russia arose from the mining and lumber concessions granted by the Korean Government to Russian subjects on the Yalu and Tumen Rivers, concessions which became of considerable importance owing to the exalted rank of the individuals at St. Petersburg financially interested in these projects. The Russians occupied Yongampo, erected telegraphs, and even began the construction of railways and fortifications, causing energetic protest on the part of Japan.

At the end of 1901 the Marquis Ito proceeded upon a confidential mission to St. Petersburg, and there can be no doubt that a serious though unsuccessful effort was made at this time by Japan to reconcile the conflicting interests of the two Powers. There followed, early in 1902, the Anglo-Japanese agreement, and on April 8 the Manchurian Convention, under which

Russia undertook to evacuate Chinese territory by degrees at certain fixed dates. Had Russia carried out the terms of this Convention, her recent humiliations would have been avoided. This evacuation received indeed a commencement of execution so far as clause (a) was concerned—namely, the withdrawal from the south-western portion of Mukden province as far as the Liao River; but when April 8, 1908, arrived, there was no sign whatever that Russia intended to keep faith and withdraw, as she had undertaken to do, from the remaining portion of Mukden province and from Kirin. Despite innumerable excuses and assurances, her troops held their ground. Russia had, in fact, deliberately determined to annex Manchuria, or, as the *Viedomosti* cynically expressed it, "We may make political mistakes, but that is no reason why we should persist in them."

The open and visible sign of this change of front was the creation of the special Imperial Lieutenancy of the Far East by the Tsar's ukase of July 30, 1908. To this Vice-Autocracy Admiral Alexeieff was appointed, and in his hands was placed the control of the diplomatic relations between Russian East Asia and neighbouring countries, and the supreme command of the naval and military forces.

Japan had never remained blind to the serious detriment caused to her national future by the character of the Russian pretensions, but she was slow to convince herself of her neighbour's bad faith. She considered it indispensable for her welfare and her safety that the independence and integrity of Korea should be maintained, and that her paramount interests in the Korean peninsula should be safely guarded. She was unable to see how this could be done should Manchuria be annexed by Russia; and, in view of Russia's pretext for the eviction of the Japanese from Liautung in 1895, she was bound to conclude that Russia on the borders of Korea rendered the independence of the peninsular state illusory. Under these circumstances Japan

communicated to Russia at the end of July, 1903, her desire to open negotiations with a view to the friendly adjustment of their mutual interests in Manchuria and Korea, and the Russian Government willingly assented to this step. On August 12 the Japanese Government submitted a basis of agreement through their representative at St. Petersburg. These proposals included :

(1) A mutual agreement to respect the independence and territorial integrity of China and Korea.

(2) A mutual agreement to maintain the principle of equality for the commerce of all nations in those two countries.

(3) Reciprocal recognition of Japan's preponderating interests in Korea, and of Russia's special interests in railway enterprises in Manchuria.

(4) Recognition by Russia of the exclusive right of Japan to give advice and assistance to Korea in the interest of good government.

(5) An engagement on the part of Russia not to impede an eventual extension of the Korean Railway into Southern Manchuria.

Owing to various causes the negotiations were subsequently transferred to Tokio, but it was not until October 3 that any serious counter-proposals were made by Russia. Even at this stage an agreement appeared hopeless. Russia declined to pledge herself respecting the sovereignty and integrity of China, or the equality of treatment of the commerce of all nations. She requested Japan to declare Manchuria and its littoral as outside her sphere of interests, and desired to place many restrictions upon Japan's freedom of action in Korea. She also suggested the establishment of a neutral zone in Korea north of the 39th parallel. This reply exposed Russia's hand, and proved that she had no intention of executing the Manchurian Convention. It was not possible for Japan to recognise Manchuria as being outside her sphere of influence. She had great commercial interests there, and her future largely depended upon their expansion ; the importance

of Manchuria's relations with Korea also constituted a political interest of the first class. For all these reasons Japan decided to reject these Russian proposals absolutely, and, after various discussions in Tokio, presented her definite amendments on October 30. The Russian Government delayed their reply until December 11, when they entirely suppressed the clause relating to Manchuria, and made various other suggestions which were unacceptable to Japan. This was contrary to the original object for which the negotiations had been initiated, and Japan consequently requested the Russian Government to reconsider their position. The Russian reply to this request was received on January 6, 1904, and it suggested the addition of the following clause:

“Recognition by Japan of Manchuria and its littoral as being outside her sphere of interests, while Russia, within the limits of that province, will not impede Japan or other Powers in the enjoyment of rights and privileges acquired by them under existing treaties with China, exclusive of the establishment of settlements.”

This proposal was made subject to the acceptance by Japan of another clause relating to a neutral zone, and to the non-employment by Japan of any Korean territory for strategic purposes—conditions which Japan had already stated that she was unable to accept. No mention whatever, in any Russian reply, was made of the integrity of China in Manchuria, which was the first object Japan desired to secure, and without which all other concessions were vain. Japan therefore renewed on January 13 her request to the Russian Government to reconsider the question afresh, and continually urged that an early reply might be given. Nevertheless, the days wore on and no reply came, while public opinion in Japan became dangerously excited.

The Russian Government had been contemptuously dilatory in replying to the Japanese communications, but they had made use of the delay to hasten warlike

preparations. As the time drew near for the promised evacuation of Manchuria, fresh ships were sent out, and on the date upon which the evacuation was due to take place there were either on the spot or *en route*, including the Mediterranean division under Admiral Virenius, 59 ships with 1,850 guns and 18,000 men. The reinforcements represented an aggregate increase of 118,000 tons subsequent to April, 1903, but they included Virenius's squadron of 80,740 tons, which was surprised by the outbreak of hostilities and compelled to put back.

The Russian army of Manchuria, theoretically always at war strength, was also steadily increased during the period of negotiations. In June, 1903, two infantry brigades of the 10th and 17th Army Corps, with six batteries, were despatched, together with some horsemen and military trains. By February, 1904, the total augmented strength, according to the Japanese calculation, was 40,000 men, and plans were in progress for the despatch of 200,000 more in case of need. Work on the Russian fortresses and upon fortified positions at Liauyang and elsewhere proceeded day and night, while seven destroyers, sent out to Port Arthur by rail in sections, were made ready for sea.

Towards the end of January troops were despatched from Port Arthur to the Yalu, and on February 1 the Russian squadron at Port Arthur put to sea at full strength.

Japan had purchased at Genoa two armoured cruisers, the *Nisshin* and *Kasuga*, and these vessels, passing by Virenius's squadron, reached Singapore during the first days of February. The evident intention of Virenius to proceed east, combined with the activity of the Port Arthur squadron, largely influenced the decision of Japan to break off negotiations. On February 3 an important council took place at Tokio in the presence of the Mikado. The Marquis Ito, the Elder Statesmen, and all the chief Ministers were present. The Council lasted for seven

hours, and it was then decided, in view of all the circumstances, to order M. Kurino, the Japanese Minister at St. Petersburg, to suspend relations and return home. On the 6th the Minister had his final audience with the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and communicated the decision of his government announcing that Japan would take such independent action as she might deem best to defend her established rights and legitimate interests.

To all save the blind diplomatists of Russia that meant war.

CHAPTER I¹

THE OUTLOOK FOR JAPAN

IN order to define with rigorous exactitude the grand lines of national policy in time of war, an observer must become thoroughly imbued with the spirit of national life by long study and intimate knowledge of the country concerned. It is only after a laborious apprenticeship that all the ideals, aspirations, tendencies, and habits of thought of a foreign people become crystallised in his mind, all the many notions in solution precipitated in the form of convictions, so that he can say without a doubt and without hesitation what course this or that foreign nation will adopt in certain given contingencies.

War is not an exact science, but an art, and so too is the collection, digestion, and reasoned judgment of all that medley of fact, fiction, rumour, and insinuation by which counsel is darkened in time of war. There are, unfortunately, few men in England, save some of those who have spent their lives in the British Consular Service in Japan and are soaked with the Japanese spirit, who are authorised to express a confident opinion upon the energy, the tenacity, and the prudence which will be displayed by Japan in the epoch-making struggle which now appears to be almost inevitable. On that subject, therefore, it is advisable not to make a picture for ourselves before we are in a better position to fill in such outlines as we already possess by the light of events impending.

¹ Compiled from an article in *The Times* of January 19, 1904.

THE RIVAL FLEETS AT THE OUTBREAK OF WAR.

RUSSIA.

BATTLESHIPS.

Name.	Displacement.	I.H.P.	Nominal Speed.	Gun Protection.	Weight of Broadside Fire.
	Tons.		Knots.	In.	Lb.
Poltava .	10,950	11,200	17.0	10-5	3,367
Petrovavlovsk .					
Sevastopol .					
Peresviet .	12,074	14,500	19.0	10-5	2,672
Pobieda .					
Retvizan .	12,700	16,000	18.0	10-5	3,434
Tsarévitch .	13,100	16,300	18.0	11-6½	3,516

ARMoured CRUISERS.

Gromoboi .	12,335	18,000	20.0	6-4½	1,197
Bayan .	7,800	17,000	22.0	7-3	952
Rosnia .	12,200	18,000	20.0	2	1,348
Rurik .	10,940	13,500	18.0	2	1,345

PROTECTED CRUISERS.

Bogatyr .	6,750	19,500	23.0	5-4	872
Askold .	6,500	19,500	23.0	—	772
Varyag .	6,500	20,000	23.0	6	510
Diana .	6,630	11,600	20.0	4½	632
Pallada .	3,200	11,500	22.0	—	180
Boyarín .	3,000	18,000	25.0	—	180
Novik .					

Of smaller vessels there were 4 gunboats, 6 sloops, 25 destroyers, 2 mining transports, and 14 first-class torpedo boats.

JAPAN.

BATTLESHIPS.

Name.	Displacement.	I.H.P.	Nominal Speed.	Gun Protection.	Weight of Broadside Fire.
	Tons.		Knots.	In.	Lb.
Hatause .	15,000	15,000	18.0	14-6	4,240
Asahi .					
Shikishima .	15,200	16,000	18.0	14-6	4,225
Mikasa .					
Yashima .	12,300	13,000	18.0	14-6	4,000
Fuji .					

ARMoured CRUISERS.

Tokiwa .	9,750	18,000	21.5	6-6	3,568
Asama .					
Yakumo .	9,850	16,000	20.0	6-6	3,368
Azuma .	9,436	17,000	21.0	6-6	3,368
Idzumo .					
Iwate .	9,800	15,000	24.7	6-6	3,568

PROTECTED CRUISERS.

Takasago .	4,300	15,500	24.0	4½-2	800
Kasagi .					
Chitose .	4,784	15,500	22.5	4½	800
Itsukushima .					
Hashidate .	4,277	5,400	16.7	11-4	1,260
Matsumura .					
Yoshino .	4,180	15,750	23.0	—	780
Naniwa .	3,727	7,120	17.8	—	1,196
Takachiho .	3,150	8,400	19.0	—	780
Akitsuishima .					
Niitaka .	3,420	9,500	20.0	—	920
Tsushima .					
Suma .	2,700	8,500	20.0	—	335
Akashi .					

Besides these there were the old battleship *Chinyen*, 7,400 tons, of 14 knots speed, carrying four 12-in. guns, 14 other small cruisers of 1,250-3,000 tons displacement, 19 destroyers, 58 first-class and 27 second-class torpedo boats.

Shortly after the outbreak of war Japan purchased at Genoa the *Moreno* and *Rivadavia*, naming them *Kasuga* and *Nishin*. These were armoured cruisers of 7,294 tons displacement; the former had one 10-in. gun, two 8-in. and fourteen 6-in.; the latter, four 8-in. and fourteen 6-in. guns: each had a speed of 20 knots.

But so far as regards the military problem which confronts the Japanese Staff, we may have less reserve, since the principles of strategy are eternal and of universal application; and if we can make a reasoned table in our minds of the data which must be now under consideration at Tokio and St. Petersburg, we may also be able, without trenching on matters which are for the moment best left unsaid, to arrive within a measurable distance of the conclusions which the advisers of the two Powers have placed on record.

If there is one principle of national strategy more pregnant with meaning than another for an insular state, it is that which affirms and reiterates the danger of the despatch of military forces across waters not thoroughly cleared of hostile ships. It is not possible to believe that a nation like Japan, with its nascent ambitions and striking capacity for almost inquisitorial research, has not grasped this root principle of combined operations. We may therefore assume that every effort will be made by Japan to gain the command of the sea before the despatch of her armies to the mainland. It is obvious that, until the Russian ships are sunk, captured, or shut up in their ports with their wings effectually clipped, there can be no security for the sea communications of an expeditionary force, and that instinctive apprehension of ever-present risk will haunt the mind of the Japanese Commander-in-Chief until this ghost is finally laid.

But it takes two to make a quarrel, and no one can foretell for certain the attitude of the main Russian squadron, for this will remain to the last the well-guarded secret of the higher command. It may be that national and professional pride, combined with the contempt with which the Russians profess to regard that brilliant and engaging people whom they are pleased to describe as "yellow pagans," may cause the Russian ships to steam proudly out to sea when the die is cast, and fight till they win or sink. Such a bold resolve would at least secure them respect. The traditions of the

offensive are so firmly planted in every Russian heart, so continually inculcated by every leader of thought, so deeply engrained in every text-book, that we are not justified in assuming that a young navy with its laurels yet to win in the Far East, and with the eyes of the world fixed upon it, will repeat the Sevastopol precedent in presence of the Japanese fleet. If, therefore, pride prevails, the Russian ships will come out and engage boldly under the most favourable conditions possible. The decision will in this case be at all events drastic, sudden, and probably final. The command of the sea will be won and lost, so far as the fleets in presence in the Pacific are concerned.

But other views may prevail. There are many indications that the Russians are not unmindful of the Torrington precedent. It must be remembered that a battle fleet is not only a mighty naval weapon, but also a great political asset, and cannot easily be replaced under a long term of years when once it has been destroyed. Its loss, by ill-timed rashness, it may be urged, will injuriously affect not only the nation itself, which will be the poorer by a fleet and by so much the weaker against other rivals for many years to come, but also its allies, who will lose part of the security upon which their bond was signed and ratified. It is, therefore, far from improbable that the Russians will endeavour to nurse their main squadron at Port Arthur as a "fleet in being," and will cast about for other means of waging offensive war. To think that a great military nation will simply endure war, and not endeavour to wage it with the utmost rigour, is to conceive strange ideas which the first shots will quickly dispel.

Information received points to the assembly of a Russian force at various points of the railway between Port Arthur and Liauyang, where it will be favourably located, if adequate transport has been provided, to act either against China, or Korea, or against a Japanese expedition directed against Port Arthur. Now, it is evident that while Russia plays a waiting game with

her fleet, she may still push down to the Yalu or beyond it, and, under the pretence of protecting the independence of Korea, proceed to take military possession of the country, endeavouring at the same time, by measures of which the history of Russia affords many examples, to scotch the Chinese dragon before it has time to raise its head. If Japan allowed this process to continue, she would lose the first game of the rubber, and in a few weeks' time see Korea in Russian hands and China terrified or dragooned into acquiescence in anything Russia may be pleased to demand. It is clear, therefore, that Japan must in this case take resolute action, even though she cannot impose a fleet action upon her enemy, and must consequently incur certain risks which she would willingly avoid.

From these considerations it results that there are two alternatives before the Japanese Staff, one or other of which will be adopted according to the proceedings of the main Russian squadron. If an old-fashioned fight takes place in the open sea and Russia is worsted, it is clear that there is no object in landing Japanese troops on the southern shores of Korea for the mere pleasure of marching through a nominally independent and not particularly hospitable country some 400 miles in length in order to meet the Russians at the other end of it. That would be merely a *succès d'estime*, and only lead to an unnecessary waste of tissue. In this event it is nearly certain that the Japanese Staff will select some point or points where they can secure a safe base to land their men, horses, guns, and waggons, and where they can be certain to throw sufficient men ashore to secure a position before it can be attacked by the Russians in force. The nearer this point is to the Japanese objective—whether a fortress or some assembled group of Russian forces, or both—the more favourable it will be for the success of the Japanese plans. If China is a friendly neutral, it is also evident that the choice of a landing at a point where the Japanese army can interpose between the Russians and Chinese.

or reduce the pressure on Peking, will entail many advantages.

But if the Russian fleet refuses action and Russian troops and diplomatists begin to dragoon and coerce Korea and China, then a more difficult problem arises, since the despatch of an expeditionary force to the mainland entails the apparent forgetfulness of a principle which can never be neglected without grave risk—no, not even though the culprit be Bonaparte himself. But if this second hypothesis accords with facts, Japan seems likely to run this risk ; and there is this to be urged in extenuation, that nothing is to be gained by delay, and that the topography of the theatre of war admits of mitigation of the risks by prudent measures.

Port Arthur is without doubt an attractive bait, and the tremendous prize that its capture would offer if the Russian squadron were still within the port must cause longing eyes to be cast at the harbour in the Yellow Sea and the names of Copenhagen and the Helder to recur to Japanese students of naval war. But Copenhagen was a surprise, strategically considered, and the Helder was only rendered possible by the antecedent defeat of the Dutch at Camperdown. It would be an inexcusable act to escort a great unwieldy fleet of transports into the north of the Yellow Sea with an unbeaten Russian fleet lying in wait at Port Arthur, and with its torpedo boats lurking in the islands of the gulf. It must, therefore, however reluctantly, be ruled out until the naval menace is effectually dispelled.

Japan is therefore bound to restrict herself to Korean ports for the landing of the first *échelon* of her armies of invasion, and the southern and western shores of the Korean Peninsula offer many harbours suitable for the landing of a military force. The roads, which during the former march of the Japanese army through Korea proved such a serious cause of delay, are now greatly improved, and every inch of the country has been mapped and studied with a wealth of detail.

The Japanese will therefore choose one or more of

these ports, land an army, and begin their advance towards the line of the Yalu. It will be no disadvantage for the Japanese to meet and settle accounts with a Russian field army before they have Port Arthur on their hands; on the contrary, it will be a distinct gain, since in case of success time will be allowed to begin the investment without serious interference from outside.

The risk of Russian naval intervention still remains. But from Port Arthur to Masanpo is over 500 miles, and no Russian squadron can reach the Korean Straits without spending at least three nights at sea while going and returning. The inferior coal capacity of the Russian squadron does not allow it to take many liberties, or to embark on far-reaching operations, save at economical rates of speed. Japan will meanwhile have studded the Korean coast with torpedo-boat stations, while watching Russian movements closely, and no one can say what may not happen to a battle fleet which passes three consecutive nights at sea within the radius of activity of these demoralising craft.

But a sailor of intelligence and resource may render his squadron secure by night; and therefore the intervention of the Port Arthur ships in the straits must be reckoned possible. But these straits are broken by the islands of Tsushima, Idzuhara, and Ikishima, all of which are in Japanese hands, and the broadest band of sea between any two points of land is only twenty-five miles. The situation of a hostile squadron in these narrow waters will be very precarious. Japan can bring her whole strength to bear, and will be fighting within hail of her own ports, while the indented coasts and maze of islands will provide an ideal theatre for the action of her splendid flotilla of torpedo boats and destroyers. It must also be steadily borne in mind that, provided the friendly neutrality of China has been secured, the situation of a Japanese army upon the mainland, even with its communications endangered, is not so precarious as a superficial study of the strategy

of the campaign might suggest. We must therefore consider that, even if the Japanese Staff are deliberating whether they may neglect a principle which has such a great consensus of experience and authority in its favour, there are at least some weighty reasons which may be pleaded in justification of incurring so serious a risk.

There are, besides, other factors to be taken into account, namely, the Vladivostok cruisers and the stream of Russian warships and of steamers filled with troops now about to pass from the Mediterranean into Eastern seas.

The great trade lines between Japan and the outer world lead south-west to Singapore, India, and Europe, south to Australia, and east to the American continent. The usual tracks followed by full-powered steam vessels can be traced with precision by reference to p. 35 of the *China Sea Directory*, vol. iv. Commerce raiding is an engaging trade, and it is no offence to the Russian navy to suggest that all ranks may find prize money a great attraction, since even more famous navies have aforetime fallen victims to its insidious charms. It may also have been urged that the destruction of the Japanese carrying trade, combined with occasional raids upon the coast of Japan, might entail a financial panic and even a political upheaval. The number of Russian troops now on the high seas might enable combined attacks upon the chief centres of Formosa, for example, to be carried out with energy and decision. No one could say what effect successes of this nature might not have upon an impressionable people thus roughly aroused from their previous state of fancied security. It is possible that Japan has suspicions that some such scheme is in the air, since the order of recall sent to all Japanese vessels on the high seas, and the withdrawal of the great fleet of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha from its regular service, give indications that Japan, as a precautionary measure, is practically abandoning ocean trading for the nonce. We can feel sure that the great

financial loss thereby involved would not be accepted without good cause. If, on the other hand, this action of Japan partly aids in the accomplishment of a Russian object—namely, the disappearance of the Japanese merchant flag from the ocean—it also shows that Russian cruisers may seek in vain for the enemy's ships and find nothing on the waters but vessels making for Japan under the flags of neutrals, whose idea of contraband of war may not, and probably will not, accord with the Russian views.

There still will be, however, the danger of raids against coast towns and the coastwise trade. Should this danger arise, Japan may well recall that we have often passed through a similar experience, and that, though we have incurred loss, the actual harm done has been comparatively slight. The withdrawal from the decisive theatre of ships that might have turned defeat into victory has often been a fatal blemish in the strategy of our enemies. The Japanese public must learn, as we have often learnt, to regard occasional raids by hostile vessels with comparative indifference, certain that they can have no lasting consequences, and are merely vexatious incidents inseparable from maritime war. It is only when fancied security leads to a surprise, when surprise breeds panic, and panic is followed by disunion, recrimination, and discontent that the raids of these Russian Jean Barts can have any serious influence upon national fortunes.

The foregoing considerations are not put forward as a mere endeavour to prophesy before the event; but if it is true that the unexpected often happens in war, it should also be added that it always, or chiefly, happens to the unprepared. Our object is rather to stir the pulse of the British people, and to make them realise the engrossing problems which may soon be solved under their eyes, and to point out that those solutions must contain lessons of surpassing interest and transcendent importance to that great maritime association, the British Empire. No campaign that has ever been

waged since the close of the Great War promises such intensely dramatic interest for England and her Empire as that which appears to be now impending. Apart from the political issues involved, which are simply incalculable, the whole theory and practice of modern naval war will be on its first great trial, and for the first time we may be able to assure ourselves, absolutely and beyond appeal, whether the millions we have sunk in our great Navy have given us the security we have the right to expect from our heavy and continuous sacrifices.

CHAPTER II¹

THE OUTLOOK FOR RUSSIA

THE chief object of the communications from the far Pacific which reach us over Russian wires is rather to conceal the truth than to disclose it. That is fair in war, and no one can object to it.

An amusing instance of the irrelevance of Russian reports to the facts may be found in the case of the *Kazan*, of the Volunteer Fleet. This ship left Perim on January 3, and its arrival at Port Arthur on the 16th was duly chronicled in all the Press agencies of Europe a few days ago. The *maximum* sea-speed of the *Kazan* at a liberal estimate is 13 knots, and from Perim to Port Arthur the distance is 6,590 miles. If this vessel be granted 300 miles a day and the necessary delays for coaling be allowed for, her arrival at Port Arthur would be anticipated on January 27 or 28 at the earliest; but, according to Admiral Alexeieff's news agency, the *Kazan* must have made the voyage at the remarkable speed of 21 knots, without stopping to coal. We can sympathise with the Russian admiral's natural anxiety when so many of his vessels have crews below strength which the *Kazan* may be expected to complete; but military deception is a fine art, and the statement regarding this ship discloses a deplorable want of finish in the training of his subordinates in an art in which Russia is peculiarly expected to excel.

Meanwhile the Japanese armoured cruisers *Kasuga* and *Nisshin*, recently purchased at Genoa, passed out

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of January 23 and 25, 1904.

of the Red Sea on January 19, showing the Russian squadron in the Mediterranean a clean pair of heels. They may reach Japan before the middle of February, and, as their armament is believed to be on board, they should be fit for service as soon as their Japanese crews are turned over to them.

Behind them Admiral Virenius's Mediterranean squadron has passed through the Canal and is also bound east, the *Oslabya* and her consorts having been joined at Suez by the *Orel* and *Saratoff*, two of the fastest steamers of the Volunteer Fleet, capable respectively of making 19 and 18·5 knots. Though the Russians inform the Press agencies that the *Saratoff* is a collier, there seems to be no doubt of the identity of this ship. These two steamers are believed to have nearly 3,000 troops on board. With this division of the Russian Fleet there are nine torpedo boats, which are to accompany the division under their own steam. There are, according to report, two more steamers of the Volunteer Fleet still to make their exit from the Black Sea—namely, the *Smolensk* and the *Peterburg*, both good and speedy vessels. Of others previously reported as under orders, the *Vladimir* and *Kieff* are said to have broken down; possibly their places may be taken by the *Tamboff* and another vessel; but one may regard it as not unlikely that 12½-knot ships would now be held back, in view of the critical stage which negotiations have reached and the absence of naval escort.

These movements of Russian ships leave little behind outside the territorial waters of Russia. The *Nikolai I.* and *Abrek* were last reported at Cherbourg, making for the Baltic; the sloop *Kubanets* remains at Port Said, and a similar vessel, the *Kreiser*, was last heard of at Vigo. There are also two more torpedo boats at present unaccounted for, which were last heard of at Brest—namely, Nos. 221 and 222. The armoured cruiser *General Admiral* was last reported by the Russian papers as on the voyage from Las Palmas

to Cape Verd Islands, but by this time may have drawn nearer to the scene of action. Her name does not seem to have been mentioned in any recent telegram, but one would gather from the *Morskoe Sbornik* that her mission, whatever it may be, is not unconnected with the Eastern crisis. Thus the centre of gravity of the Russian navy has been entirely displaced, and a very large squadron is either on the Pacific coast or on the way thither.

It is worth while, during the brief interval which may separate us from the outbreak of hostilities, to review very briefly the history of this gradual process of reinforcement, since it would seem to negative the popular impression that Russia has been bluffing on a bad hand. So far as regards naval force, and apart altogether from the quality of this force, Russia has taken her precautions.

At the end of 1902 Russia had but 26 ships of all classes in the Pacific, mounting 679 guns of all calibres, and with 8,400 officers and men. When it was decided in December, 1902, to reinforce this squadron, 20 more ships were despatched, bringing up the total to 46, with 1,098 guns, and nearly 14,000 officers and men, the displacement of this squadron then amounting to some 200,000 tons. What was clearly intended was by no means a bluff, but such an imposing array of fighting ships that Russia might be able to dictate her own terms and settle herself quietly down as the undisputed mistress of East Asia. That point is made quite clear by an important article published by the *Novosti* in December, 1902, upon the military situation in the Pacific, which it described as "the most probable theatre of the next armed conflict." The *Novosti* showed how far more ready Russia was than at the close of the Sino-Japanese War; it proudly declared that she was now solidly established in the Pacific, and "could aspire to great political results, and expect to secure them." "We possess force on our side," it added, "and resources sufficient to solve the most difficult problems,"

As the time drew near for the promised "evacuation" of Manchuria, fresh reinforcements were despatched, and on the date upon which Russia was to have fulfilled her assurances there were either on the spot or *en route*—including the Mediterranean squadron now steaming eastward, but exclusive of the steamers of the Volunteer Fleet—no fewer than 59 ships with 1,850 guns of all calibres, manned by 18,000 officers and seamen, while in second line there were 83 less important vessels of the Siberian flotilla. This was no bluff, but a very remarkable and serious deployment of material force, and it is abundantly evident that this display was intended to terrorise Japan into acquiescence with anything Russia might choose to dictate. The creation of the Viceroyalty of the Far East followed; it was, as the *Viedomosti* bluntly declared, a "decisive and necessary step to affirm the situation which Russia has created for herself in the East," while, as regards the promised evacuation, it cynically declared that "one may commit political faults, but that is no reason why one should persevere in them."

Russia has made and is making the same mistake with regard to the Japanese that Napoleon made concerning the Tsar Alexander and his Russians in 1812—namely, to underrate their tenacity and misread their character. Far from being appalled by this imposing array of naval force, Japan confronted the situation with quiet confidence. Her diplomacy was not weakened as fresh Russian ships appeared on the scene; it rather became inspired with a more unbending will and more tenacious resolution. Never before has Russian diplomacy been so completely baffled.

War, we may believe in all sincerity, Russia never meant and never intended; the whole aim and object of this great display of force was the prevention of war, coupled, be it understood, with the accomplishment of Russian aims in the Pacific. With a Tsar ostensibly vowed to the gods of Peace, the method adopted was the only possible means of harmonising national

aspirations with assumed Imperial predilections. But Russia is now discovering that a mere tally of war-vessels does not constitute naval predominance; that docks, arsenals, skilled mechanics, and all the vast paraphernalia of naval yards are so many component and inseparable parts of sea supremacy. Looking too late upon the ill-ordered medley of inadequate provision for all the wants of a great fleet in the restricted haven of Port Arthur, Russia recognises at last her fault, is unable to repair it, hesitates and wavers.

Port Arthur contains in its narrow harbour what Metz contained for the army of Bazaine—the fatal germs of strategic death. The great war fleet of Russia in the Pacific is in a parlous position; it has no business to be where it is, and the full consequences of its growth, far beyond all the measure of the resources of its Eastern dockyards, were insufficiently realised when the the great concentration began. They are realised now.

The appointment of Admiral Alexeieff to his present position dates only from last July, and, as events had not at that moment assumed their present critical complexion, the incident failed to arouse more than passing curiosity. It is therefore advisable to see how this matter stands. The Ukase of July 30 ordained the creation of—to give it its correct name—a special Imperial Lieutenancy, which would concentrate in its hands all civil, military, and maritime power in the Far East, that is to say in the Priamur and Kwantung districts. The former of these districts includes the Transbaikal, Amur, and Maritime Provinces, or, including Kwantung, a total population of a million and a quarter, and an area measuring 1,400 miles from west to east and 3,500 miles from north to south. It is a very respectable empire in itself, so far as the bare fact of superficies is concerned, and the Imperial Lieutenant has absolute powers respecting all arrangements for the preservation of order and security in this

territory, whether upon the East China railways or elsewhere.

But this is not all. Admiral Alexeieff is the obligatory medium for the correspondence of the whole of the administrations under his control, which have neither the right nor the power of entertaining any direct relations whatsoever with the various Ministries at St. Petersburg. But, even further than this, the entire control of the diplomatic relations between these territories and neighbouring states is in his hands, and definitely secured to him by Ukase, as also is the command of all troops and all ships in East Asia. It is a Vice-Autocracy. The only measure, so far as can be ascertained, that has been taken to define the powers of the Imperial Lieutenant has been a declaration that these are to be governed by the terms of the Imperial rescript of January 30, 1845, which created a Lieutenantancy of the Caucasus, to which appointment Admiral Alexeieff's office bears little or no resemblance.

The Imperial Lieutenant is, however, responsible to a special Committee of the Far East, over which the Tsar presides in person. This committee includes the Ministers of the Interior, Finance, Foreign Affairs, and War, besides any other individuals whom the Tsar may desire to call upon for purposes of consultation, but it has no executive power whatever, and can only assist or impede the Imperial Lieutenant according as the views of the various Ministers consulted are in accord with those of the Tsar or the reverse. So long as this Ukase remains in force there can be no question of Count Lamsdorff's absolutely re-seizing the threads of Russian policy in the Far East, as suggested by *Le Temps*. Subject only to the will of the Tsar, Admiral Alexeieff's authority is supreme, and this explains the reason why diplomatic communications at the present juncture are necessarily slow and the procedure tedious, since everything has to pass through the hands of the distant Lieutenant, who has, wisely or unwisely, been made the obligatory medium for all communications.

The Russian Minister for War, General Kuropatkin, is a man specially versed in the intricate details of supply and administration, and no one better than Skobelev's erstwhile brilliant lieutenant can reckon up all that an army in the field requires to draw from its base in time of war ; all, in fact, that is contained in that word of evil omen—communications. The supply of 200,000 or more Russian troops on the Pacific littoral, at a distance of 5,000 miles from the centre of the empire, by means of a poorly-constructed single line of rail, cut into two parts by Lake Baikal, is a truly stupendous task, from which the stoutest heart of the most accomplished quartermaster-general might well recoil appalled. If we observe that it takes a month to send a battalion from Moscow to Port Arthur, and then proceed to calculate the average daily wants of the army in the way of stores, supplies, ammunition, and material, the strain it will entail on the traffic, and the insecurity of the line itself, we shall thank heaven that we are a maritime nation, and that our grand lines of communication pass by way of the sea.

We shall probably be ready, after making such calculations, to concur with the estimate of the Japanese Staff, that 250,000 men is the *maximum* number of Russian troops that can be kept alive and efficient by means of the Trans-Siberian Railway in its present condition. Let us consider, again, what pressing claims will be made upon the railway for the transport of naval stores, and eventually of coal, if the Russian fleet fails to clear the sea by a decisive victory. It is evident that the naval service alone will desire to usurp a very large share of the traffic. But the railway is in the hands of the army, and the two services in Russia stand even further apart from each other than they do elsewhere. The situation is thus one of great complexity, and, whether the Viceroy Admiral restricts himself to politics or assumes the command of the army, his position remains that of a fish removed from its native element.

What seems certain is that the Russian army is at present comparatively weak in numbers, that it will be even more strictly tied down to the railway than ever was our army in South Africa, and that the greater the numbers the less will be their mobility. In view of all these considerations, the conclusion is forced upon us that the Russian Viceroy of the Far East has been surprised *en flagrant délit de concentration*, and that the immediate military outlook for Russia is cheerless, containing little but the prospect of unbalanced risks.

All discussion upon eventualities upon the mainland must, however, remain academic until the naval situation is cleared up. The Russian bear has disagreed with many famous military digestions, and the chances are that he will prove excessively tough. The Russian ships are good, the officers and men are carefully selected, while the little that is known of Russian gunnery would seem to indicate that it is above the average. The command of the sea is not an asset with which one side or the other begins a war; it is the prize of battle, and has to be fought for and won. Nowadays, when the finest battleship can be sunk at a blow by a torpedo fired in the night by an unseen enemy at 3,000 yards' range or more, it requires some boldness to dogmatise on the result of a fleet action or to predict the issue of a maritime war.

If then, as report declares, General Kuropatkin is opposed to war, one can only make the comment that it proves him to be a man of sense, and that it is unfortunate for Russia that she was so short-sighted as to have taken for the substance of military predominance what was, in fact, but the semblance.

After all, Russia is fighting for its dinner, and Japan for its life. It is reasonable that Japan, which has organised all its forces on sea and land with the single purpose of success in the campaign now impending, should have more accurately studied the conditions and weighed the chances than even mighty Russia, with her attention distracted by many anxieties and

her best brains employed upon all sorts of other problems having no connection whatever with the subject in hand. How Russia proposes to emerge from the hopeless quagmire into which she has been plunged by lack of foresight it will be for the future to show. If we can picture ourselves at the Russian conclaves which are considering this question, we can well believe that in such a proud military empire there must be many voices raised in favour of stubborn resolves.

Tout peut se rétablir, as Napoleon III. telegraphed laconically after the first German victories in 1870; nothing is lost so long as Russian fleets and armies remain unbeaten. The plain evidence before the world, however, is that Russia must either accept the terms of Japan and retire, with an immense loss of prestige, or fight to retain a position she has deliberately taken up.

CHAPTER III ¹

RUSSIAN TROOPS, REINFORCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

THE reports received from several correspondents of *The Times* who are in a position to supply accurate information, enable us to advance a step towards penetration of the customary veil of mystery which enshrouds the proceedings of Russian armies in the field.

Until evidence is given to disprove the very complete and remarkable summary of the Russian forces east of Lake Baikal sent by the Peking correspondent of *The Times* on January 21,² the estimate of numbers therein given holds the field. Reckoning up the

¹ From *The Times* of February 2, 1904.

PEKING, January 21.

² The following corrected list of the Russian military forces in the Far East to date comprises all the troops east of Lake Baikal in Siberia and Manchuria, including those guarding the whole of the Manchurian railways and the railways between Vladivostok and Khabarovka, and those guarding the Amur River, and the troops on shore at Vladivostok, Possiet Bay, Dalny, and Port Arthur.

The total strength at the present moment in this vast region consists, inclusive of the frontier or railway guard, of 3,115 officers, 147,479 men, and 266 guns.

The infantry, numbering 2,100 officers and 105,829 men, consists in the first place of 32 regiments of East Siberian Rifles, each with 39 officers and 1,906 men. Each regiment has one company of mounted infantry. There are also four regiments of regular army infantry from Russia, Nos. 123, 124, 139, and 140, consisting of 16 battalions with 312 officers and 15,248 men; also 16 battalions of infantry field reserve with 252 officers and 15,300 men; also one battalion and one company of fortress infantry from Nikolaievsk with 20 officers and 1,186 men. The two battalions of Port Arthur fortress infantry recently became the 29th Regiment, and the six battalions of Vladivostok fortress infantry became the 30th, 31st, and 32nd Regiments

available troops of all arms, the correspondent placed the nominal strength on the date given at 150,000 men and 266 guns. His telegram must be regarded as a *tour de force* in the art of military intelligence, and as a model of accurate and concise reporting.

A critical examination of the very complete details sent in this remarkable telegram only serves to confirm its accuracy at almost every point. It includes the whole of the troops of the 1st and 2nd Siberian Army Corps and of the Kwantung military district, besides fortress troops, frontier guards, and other forces not included in the larger units now present in East Asia. The names or numbers and the normal garrisons of all these troops are known in England, and all information concerning them can therefore be rigorously checked.

of East Siberian Rifles. The frontier guard infantry, 55 companies with 268 officers and 13,103 men, make up the total of the infantry.

Of cavalry there are 148 squadrons, with 603 officers and 21,914 men, made up of six regular cavalry squadrons from Russia, 87 squadrons of Trans-Baikal Cossacks, and 55 frontier guard squadrons.

The artillery consists of 36½ batteries, with 266 guns. There are 15 field batteries of eight guns each and one of six guns; four horse batteries of six guns each; two mountain batteries of eight guns each and one of six guns; one heavy battery of eight guns; one horse mountain section with two guns; also six batteries with six quick-firers each; also six frontier guard batteries of eight guns each. Each battery consists of six officers and 242 men. There are also two battalions of garrison artillery at Vladivostok and two at Port Arthur, consisting of 16 companies with 42 officers and 2,620 men; also one company at Nikolaievsk. The total artillery force is 264 officers and 10,667 men.

The engineers comprise 22 companies with 88 officers and 3,745 men—namely, two battalions of East Siberian Engineers, including a telegraph company; the 4th Trans-Amur railway battalion (not four battalions as reported); also the Ussuri railway brigade; also the Port Arthur engineer company, besides one submarine mining company at Nikolaievsk and another at Vladivostok; also a balloon section.

The supply transport comprises 60 officers and 5,423 men.

In reading these figures it is necessary to remember and to understand certain facts about the Russian position. First, the line of communications between Manchuria and Western Siberia consists of a single line of lightly constructed railway; secondly, the Manchurian Railway, which is somewhat exposed to wreckage, traverses for 1,555 miles an unfriendly country whose people may possibly regard the Japanese as liberators; thirdly, the total strength given represents the full war strength and assumes that not a single man is sick or absent nor a single gun disabled.

All the Russian fleet, except four armoured cruisers at Vladivostok, is at present at Port Arthur, wedged in a confined harbour, or rather basin, with only one dock available for repairs.

The telegram in question contains proof that account has been taken of the latest changes in Russian military organisation in the Far East, since it enumerates regiments which have only been formed during the last few weeks on the strength of *prikazes* of quite recent date.

We are also enabled for the first time to ascertain which army corps in the west are being drawn upon for reinforcements. Of four regiments named, Nos. 128, 124, 139, and 140, the first two belong to the 10th Russian Army Corps of the Kharkoff district, and the remainder to the 17th or Moscow Army Corps. Whether the remaining units of these corps are under orders or on the move eastwards there is at present nothing to show.

Besides these regiments of the active army there are, it would appear, sixteen battalions of reserve infantry in Manchuria. It is probable, but it is not quite certain, that these belong to the 1st Siberian Reserve Brigade, whose headquarters are at Chita. *The Times* correspondent very properly remarks that the numbers he gives "represent the full war strength" and take no account of waste. The numbers, in point of fact, accurately represent the war strengths at which these Russian forces should stand if they were up to their proper strength, a subject upon which nothing definite is yet known. The Russian troops in East Asia are always nominally on a war footing, and it may be added that for some time past companies of infantry have been drawn from European garrisons and sent east to complete effectives.

Many considerations arise from a close study of this information. It would appear that out of 266 field guns only 36 are of the new quick-firing pattern. This statement may be compared with the announcement that has been made, on the faith of German reports of Russian origin, that the whole of the artillery to be employed against Japan "is now armed with quick-firing guns." Both the Russian and the Japanese artillery are at present in the stage of transition, and

nothing is more difficult than to secure accurate details of the progress of the rearmament of a foreign artillery. The new 1900 pattern 8-in. quick-firing Russian field gun is in process of manufacture, and the exact number of batteries issued to the troops is not known. The same remark applies to the new Arisaka quick-firing field gun of Japan at present under construction at the Osaka arsenal. It is, however, probable that each side will make superhuman efforts to bring the largest number of these new guns into the field, and this fact may account for the rumours of the movement of Russian batteries from garrisons like Lodz, on the German frontier, which would naturally have been the first to receive the new material so long as there was no danger of war in the East.

We must remember, however, that a wholesale change in the artillery armament entails the transport of not only the new guns, but of the ammunition and all the vast *impedimenta* of ammunition columns and parks. Even when such change is effected, the old *personnel* must either be replaced or trained in the efficient use of the new material, and, whether one solution or the other is preferred, it is a work requiring time. The technical details made public respecting these two new models are at present insufficient to enable us to institute a close comparison or to draw any final conclusions, but it would seem that the new Russian gun has a greater initial velocity, a longer range, and can fire with more rapidity. It is useless, however, to possess a better gun than the enemy unless the gunners are thoroughly trained in its use. In the older classes of field guns the Russians also seem to have the advantage, and in case of war the first duel of the rival gunners will be watched with an interest not untinged with a modicum of anxiety by the friends of Japan.

The Peking correspondent of *The Times* places the frontier guard infantry at 13,371 and the cavalry at fifty-five squadrons, presumably Cossack *sotnias*, which

at war strength would give nearly 10,000 men ; adding the six batteries of frontier guard artillery, we should find a total of between 24,000 and 25,000 men told off for the guard of the line of communications along the railway. It may also be noticed that the five Cossack *voiskos* in East Asia, presuming all classes liable to serve are called out, can supply 60,000 men and nearly 50,000 troop horses ; certain categories of the reserve and of the *opoltschenie* or landsturm in non-Cossack territories would also give an additional number to be drawn upon in case of emergency, without calling up fresh troops from the west.

One of the points of greatest interest in the Peking telegram is the proof it appears to afford that a smaller number of Russian troops has been despatched from the west than was believed. Confirmation of this is given by *The Times* correspondent on the Russian side, whose letter of January 12 from Khailar, an important station on the Manchurian railway, makes it clear that he has so far found little evidence of special preparation for war : and he states that he learns on excellent authority that only 15,000 men have passed eastward since June last, and that several thousand time-expired men have been sent home. All this gives the measure of the amount of reliance we can place on statements which have been made in the Continental press respecting the flow of Russian troops eastward, and serves to confirm the impression that the Russian War Office, at all events, have neither desired nor intended to make war. It is clearly Russia's interest to avoid war at almost any cost until the railway round Lake Baikal is completed, the carrying power of the Trans-Siberian Railway improved, the Port Arthur docks built, and the battleships now on the stocks in the Baltic made ready for sea. When these things are done the whole conditions of a struggle with Japan for supremacy in the East will become radically altered.

So far as concerns communications by land, the strangulation at Lake Baikal is a serious disadvantage

for Russia. *The Times* correspondent in Manchuria states that two steamers are now running across the lake, the largest making seven voyages, or fourteen crossings, in two days. He tells us that the railway round the lake will not be completed until 1905, or a year later than Russian calculations had anticipated, and he adds that by the combined means of sledges and steamers some 750 tons of stores can be conveyed across the lake in twenty-four hours. From this he concludes that eight trainloads can be taken across the lake every day, and that this figure represents the *maximum* capacity of the traffic on the line of communications at this important point.

This question requires a little further elucidation. The break in the Trans-Siberian at Lake Baikal is a serious blemish in the Russian military position in the East. A railway is under construction round the southern shores of the lake, but so far it has only reached Tonkhoy, whence it is a two hours' journey to the eastern shore. The railway enterprise encounters difficulties; it requires the piercing of many tunnels through the spurs of the lofty mountains which fall abruptly to the shores of the lake, and Russian engineers have very little experience of making tunnels and are not adepts in this branch of railway work. There are, besides, broad and deep marshes to be spanned, and the plant required for this purpose will require many construction trains to be devoted to its transport if the work is to be carried on concurrently with the supply and reinforcements of the army in the East. We learnt what it meant in the Sudan to continue work on a railway and yet keep an army of only 20,000 men at the front supplied. The Russian numbers are ten times greater, and the line of communications three times longer; the Russian difficulties are therefore by so much the greater, even though the Trans-Siberian is, on the whole, more solid than the desert railway of 1898. Lake Baikal is 400 miles in length, and is usually frozen over for several months

in winter, the first serious frost having occurred this year on January 2. The ice generally increases to a thickness of three feet, and though two steam ice-breakers are available and can break through ice of moderate thickness, heavy frost is liable to cause steam traffic to be suspended.

During the months of February, March, and April, the traffic is almost exclusively by sledge; it is at this moment that the circulation on the Russian roads in the East reaches its *maximum*, and so long as Baikal remains hard frozen it is rather an advantage than the reverse. But the lake is subject to severe storms, and if these occur before the ice has become firmly set it becomes hummocky, and the traffic by means of sledges is often delayed. In early spring and in autumn the greatest difficulties arise, since the ice is too weak to bear sledges, and yet strong enough to impede navigation, except by specially constructed craft. With the melting of the ice the Russians are thrown back upon their steamers, and when this moment arrives the French General Staff calculates that only two trainloads can be despatched each way in twenty-four hours.

The calculation of the Japanese Staff is that at present six trains a day can be sent east every twenty-four hours under wholly favourable circumstances, but they believe that four trains a day are more likely to represent the fact. One must, however, differentiate between the Trans-Siberian and the so-called East China railways of Russia. The methods used in the construction of the latter sections were a distinct advance upon those employed in the Siberian line. There was less corruption and fraud, more honesty, and consequently more solidity in construction. For these reasons we must calculate that for all local railway transport in the triangle Port Arthur-Kharbin-Vladivostok it should be possible to despatch twelve to fifteen trains a day at an average speed of twenty miles an hour, provided sufficient rolling stock is available, and that so long as these railways remain intact they should

play a most important *rôle* in enabling Russia to meet a Japanese attack, or to transfer Russian forces from one flank of the front of strategic deployment to the other.

As regards China, the most important point to bear in mind is that the preponderating influence of the great Viceroys and of the Chinese military authorities will be almost wholly on the side of Japan, no matter what temporary successes Russian diplomacy may achieve in Peking. It is a Japanese interest for China to remain neutral, so that Russia may not be able to clear her flank by an act of vigour against China before the Japanese army is able to intervene effectively upon the mainland.

CHAPTER IV¹

THE PACIFIC SQUADRON LEAVES PORT

ON January 30 the Russian squadron at Port Arthur was galvanised into activity by an order which arrived late at night ordering the ships in the category known as the "Armed Reserve" to be at once completed for sea, and the entire squadron to leave port. For all practical purposes it has now been proved that there is little difference between the readiness of ships in commission and of those in this so-called category of reserve. It was known that the difficulties of the entrance channel and the inferior seamanship of Russian officers would render the despatch of the squadron to sea a somewhat laborious operation. The Russian war-ships are not usually navigated either into or out of Port Arthur under their own steam by their own officers, but are towed by tugs in charge of local pilots.

The process of extracting the squadron from the inner harbour and East basin began early on January 31, and took three days; it was only on the afternoon of February 3 that the squadron steamed out to sea, part of this naval force, at least, returning to the shelter of the shore batteries twenty-four hours later. The squadron was observed off the east coast of the Shantung promontory on the 4th, when twenty-six ships were counted, and though there is a doubt con-

¹ From *The Times* of February 8, 1904.

cerning one vessel, it seems probable that all the best of the Russians ships are at sea.

What may have been the object of this short cruise other than the very necessary one of resorting to the natural element of a navy, and of shaking the ships together, is not for the moment clear, nor is it certain whether the rumoured approach of sixty Japanese vessels towards the same waters was the cause of the prompt and prudent return of the Russian battle fleet under the protection of its shore batteries. If the Russian squadron were British, and a *St. Vincent* were installed at the Admiralty on the Neva, we could venture an opinion on the orders under which this squadron would probably act in case of war. But as in every great military nation the military question—using the term in its popular sense—comes first, and the navy is too often a mere accessory to military ends, we must first see how the military question stands and then judge this naval movement in relation to it.

The obligatory line of initial deployment of the Russian land forces in the Far East was sketched out in the columns of *The Times* some weeks ago, and upon this line the Russian troops have since been steadily accumulating. Port Arthur, with its outlying defences extending up to Talienwan Bay, and the narrow grip at Kinchou where the promontory connects with the mainland, has a strong garrison, which may be set down at about 25,000 men of the land forces. An important part of the active troops of this garrison, numbering 9,000 men, was removed during the first days of February, partly to defend the railway against hostile raids and partly to strengthen the force assembling on the Yalu. The place of the troops sent away from Port Arthur will be taken by four of the new regiments of East Siberian Rifles recently created from the old fortress units.

Standing on the defensive, as Russia does and must for the moment, her forces are necessarily scattered, the threat implied by an expected descent of a

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Japanese army making it indispensable to take precautions, so that, no matter what the plan of the Japanese may be, the Russian forces may be in a position to resist with vigour. It is for this reason that strong detachments of Russian troops have been posted at various points on the railway between Niu-chwang and Liauyang. They serve to protect the railway against raids from seaward, and in the event of a more formidable attack can combine to form the nucleus of a force astride the railway and the line of advance of a Japanese army upon Mukden and Kharbin.

Towards the Yalu there has been a considerable movement for some time past, the apparent object of this movement being to place a strong containing force upon all the roads leading northward from Korea. The line held is a very extended one, reaching as it does from Antung, near the mouth of the Yalu, up to the source of the Amnokkiang beyond Samsoun, where probably touch is gained with detachments of troops from Vladivostok. The greater part of the line is doubtless merely a chain of observation posts held by Cossacks to prevent the incursion of small parties to the northward; stronger detachments guard the few roads which traverse the boundary, and the bulk of what may be designated as the strategic advanced guard is stationed on the lower Yalu, with headquarters at Fenghwangchenn, through which passes the best road of all those that traverse the Korean frontier. On the lower Yalu there are probably not less than 20,000 Russians, who can be supplied by the sea while the sea is open, and also from the railway at Liauyang, whence 100 carts are said to proceed daily to the camps at the front.

No correspondent has yet found his way to the Russian camps on the Yalu, and the estimate of 20,000 men as the Russian strength at this point is therefore only an approximation. The tally of Russian forces sent to us by St. Petersburg has the customary

disadvantage of Russian news—namely, that of being contrary to fact. The Russian army, we are told, “which would operate” in the Far East aggregates 390,000 men, and 110,000 more can be sent east every month. Doubtless the whole Russian army “would operate” in the Far East if it could, but the whole point of the military situation is that it cannot. No one in England is disposed to under-estimate for a moment the patriotism and the solidarity of the Russian army and the Russian nation. History affords too many proofs of the courage of the one and the tenacity of the other for any such error to be permissible. But if a Russian staff officer exists who is capable of supplying the wants of an army of half a million men by means of a single non-continuous line only capable of admitting of the passage of four trains a day at an average speed of 70 to 200 miles in the twenty-four hours, at a distance of 5,000 miles from Moscow, the shade of Moltke must hide his diminished head. And if this same officer proposes to interpolate 110,000 men a month in the midst of his supply trains he is certainly a sanguine spirit.

The natural inference from such facts concerning the military position as are known is that Russia intends to stand on the defensive to the north-west of Korea, as elsewhere, so placing her troops that she may be able to resist an advance from Korea and oppose raiding parties at other points in strength. Russia arrogates to herself political merit from this course, and prides herself upon her moderation and forbearance, but there is no inherent merit in any act performed under compulsion, and, in view of the drain upon the field army entailed by the garrisons, no other course is open to Russia but the defensive, unless her squadron clears the sea by a decisive victory, in which case the force on the Yalu would probably enter Korea.

It is natural that the presence of a strong Russian force on the Yalu should provoke alarm at Seoul,

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whence the Russian Minister, M. Pavloff, continues to scatter abroad all sorts of strange fancies, which are rather entertaining than instructive; but an advance of the Yalu troops into Korea appears to offer no advantage to Russia, and many disadvantages. There is, therefore, no special reason to expect it, although, should the occupation of certain Korean ports become a military necessity to Japan, the Russians would naturally cease to pay any further attention to the tracing of a conventional frontier.

One must always anticipate that a commander will adopt the line of action which is most in consonance with his interests. In the initial strategic deployment of an army this is all the more likely to happen, since the whole plan of campaign will have been usually thought out by the best brains in conclave, and the personal element will have been more or less eliminated. It is later on, when the unexpected happens, and decisions have to be made which have not been considered in advance, that the personal factor resumes all its importance, and victory inclines to the commander who makes the fewest mistakes.

To revert now to the naval question, what is the *rôle* of the squadron in this defensive deployment that has been described? Obviously to fall upon the Japanese navy if it is signalled escorting a convoy of transports, or even if it offers battle unhampered by transports, provided the disparity of strength is not too great. But if it takes three days to pass the Russian squadron through the entrance channel of Port Arthur, it is clear that the squadron may miss its opportunity, since even in 1894 the Japanese proved capable of landing a division and a half in fifteen days, and they are now much more advanced in the difficult art of disembarkation than they were in the last war. It is therefore necessary that the Russian squadron should be in the outer roadstead, or at some other port more suitable for its purpose, or at sea.

When the 2nd Japanese army under Marshal Oyama



FIELD-MARSHAL MARQUIS IWAO OYAMA

landed to attack Port Arthur in 1894, the mouth of the Huaquan River east of Pitszewo was selected, and here the army was thrown ashore, the escorting fleet covering the movement from the Elliot Islands, which stand out like sentries off the line of coast. There is a good anchorage at Thornton Haven, and the Russian torpedo flotilla has been constantly in observation at this point. As an alternative jumping-off place Thornton Haven has some advantages, but, on the whole, the heavy guns of the shore batteries at Port Arthur are likely to offer the greatest attraction to a navy unaccustomed to blue water, and the Russian Admiral will probably be in no great hurry to lose sight of them for long, deprived as he is of the Vladivostok cruisers and with the Russian squadron from the Mediterranean still far away.

So far as can be judged, the Russian squadron is anchored outside the old Chinese boom which is in position at the narrow entrance, while a second boom closes the east port where the torpedo boats of the *defense mobile* are stationed. The squadron is therefore open to attack, and even invites it, secured, no doubt, against surprise by patrol boats and scouts at sea, and with its nets in position to defy torpedoes.

The great strength of the coast defences of Port Arthur, the dominating position of some of the forts, and the number and calibre of the guns in battery, many of which run up to 10 and 12 inches, render an attack upon the Russian fleet in its present position an extremely hazardous undertaking for Japanese battle-ships. There is no sort of analogy between Port Arthur and Aboukir Bay, and one cannot believe that the Japanese navy will not find a much better means of measuring its strength with its opponent in his present position than by engaging him with heavy ships at such a great and manifest disadvantage.

The Japanese Government must be heartily congratulated upon the measures it has taken to prevent the publication of a single item of news disclosing its plans or the position of any part of its armed forces.

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An insular state has peculiar advantages in this respect if it takes its measures of precaution in advance, and these precautions have been very thoroughly well taken by Japan. The result is that an enemy, when war breaks out, is in constant doubt and dread; feints are magnified into serious attacks, and troops are marched and counter-marched to respond to conditions changing from day to day. Orders, counter-orders, disorders follow in rapid succession, and the fight for position is half won before the first shots are fired. The initiative—that is what every good soldier and sailor always prays for, and in the hands of an insular state, prepared for war, it can become a terrible weapon indeed.





CHAPTER V¹

THE SURPRISE AT PORT ARTHUR

THE Japanese navy, thanks to the masculine decision of the Mikado and his advisers, has taken the initiative, and has opened the war by an act of daring. On the night of February 8-9 ten Japanese destroyers in three divisions surprised the Russian squadron in the outer roadstead at Port Arthur, and delivered their attack with such good effect that two of the best battleships of the Russian squadron and a cruiser were disabled. The Japanese boats then made good their escape without injury. "I most devotedly inform your Majesty," telegraphs Admiral Alexeieff to the Tsar, "that about midnight between February 8 and 9 Japanese torpedo boats delivered a sudden mine attack on the squadron lying in the Chinese roads at Port Arthur, the battleships *Retvisan* and *Tsarevitch* and the cruiser *Pallada* being holed. The degree of seriousness of the holes has to be ascertained. Particulars will be forwarded to your Imperial Majesty."

Of the two battleships injured, the *Tsarevitch*, at present commanded by Captain Grigorovitch, was built at La Seyne. She was commissioned towards the end of 1902, and sent out to the East later than any of the other Russian battleships on the station. She is the largest ship in the squadron, displacing 13,100 tons, with 16,300 I.H.P., 18 knots nominal speed, gun protection of 6 in. to 11 in., and a weight of broadside

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of February 10, 11, and 15, 1904.

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fire totalling 3,516 lb. The *Retvisan*, now commanded by Captain Shtchensnovitch, was lately the flagship of Rear-Admiral Baron Stackelberg, and has a displacement of 12,700 tons; she has 16,000 I.H.P., 18 knots speed, from 5 in. to 10 in. of armour, and a weight of broadside fire of 3,434 lb. She was built at Cramp's yards at Philadelphia, and was commissioned two years ago for the first time.

These battleships are the two most powerful vessels of the Russian squadron; they are the best armoured and the best armed. Their disappearance from the fighting line at this juncture is nothing less than a national calamity for Russia, and may have consequences that can hardly be exaggerated.

The third vessel injured is the *Pallada*, a first-class protected cruiser commanded by Captain Kosovitch. She is a comparatively new ship, having been launched in August, 1899, and is of 6,630 tons displacement, with a speed of 20 knots. This vessel was also among the ships which were sent eastward to reinforce the Russian squadron in the early part of last year.

Owing to its position in the outer roadstead the Russian squadron was open to, and invited, attack. The invitation has been accepted with a promptness and a punctuality that do high honour to the navy of our gallant allies. Our anticipation was that the Russian squadron was doubtless secured against surprise by patrol boats and scouts at sea, and that nets were probably in position to defy torpedoes. This, it would appear, was a too sanguine estimate to make of Russian prudence and foresight, but whether precautions were taken or not, it is clear that they were absolutely ineffectual. The moral effect of this exploit promises to be enormous, and may influence and colour the whole conduct of the war.

On the day following this surprise, Admiral Togo engaged the Russian squadron with the heavy guns of his battle-fleet at a range of 8,000 yards. In this fighting the Russian battleship *Poltava*, the first-class

protected cruisers *Diana* and *Askold*, and the second-class cruiser *Novik* were injured. The damage done to the Japanese ships was repaired in a few days, and placed none of them out of action. The Russian losses in the night attack were fifteen, and in the action next day sixty-six.

Admiral Togo's official report of the fighting at Port Arthur on the 8th and 9th gives the interesting intelligence that the Japanese squadron suffered but very slight damage and that its fighting strength has not decreased. It appears from the report that "the combined fleet" left Sasebo on the 6th, and that "everything went off as planned." The details of the night attack are not recorded, but it appears that the cause of the cessation of the fight on the 9th was the retreat of the Russians towards the harbour, with a view, no doubt, of drawing the Japanese under the closer fire of the land batteries. Admiral Togo very wisely resisted the temptation of following, and steamed away with a loss of four killed and fifty-four wounded, or approximately the same as that suffered by the Russians, but with his ships uninjured. He states that the Russians appeared to be demoralised, and it is probable that they had hardly recovered from the moral effect of the previous night's surprise.

During the torpedo-boat attack a light southerly breeze was blowing; the wind increased in force by the 10th, and the Japanese Admiral gives this as his reason for not sending more detailed reports from the ships under him. If the intention was to have continued the attack on the following nights, this fact may have accounted for a change of plan.

On February 11 a fresh disaster occurred. The mining transport *Yenisei*, endeavouring to secure a submarine mine which had become displaced at the entrance of Talienwan Bay, struck against another mine, which exploded under her bows, causing the vessel to sink so rapidly that 96 of her crew perished. The *Yenisei* was laid down at Kronstadt in 1898 and

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launched the following year. She was of 2,500 tons displacement, $17\frac{1}{2}$ knots speed, and had 4,700 I.H.P. Her armament consisted of five 4·7-in. and six smaller quick-firing guns, and she carried normally 500 mines. This disaster has cost Russia dear, and, besides the regrettable loss of life, will have entailed the disappearance of valuable stores which will not easily be replaced, although a sister-ship, the *Amur*, still remains at disposal. So far as one can judge from the Viceroy's report, the Japanese had no hand in this affair, which discloses a carelessness at least equal to that which has marked the earlier phases of the Russian naval proceedings.

While these events were occurring at or near Port Arthur, a detached division of the Japanese navy under Admiral Uriu, accompanied by transports, made for Chemulpo. On the arrival of this force off the port on the evening of Monday, February 8, the Russian gunboat *Korietz*, an old unarmoured vessel of 1,200 tons displacement and 13 knots speed, opened fire upon the Japanese, and then ran for the harbour to join her consort, the *Variag*, a vessel which marked her passage out to the East by a demonstrative cruise in the Persian Gulf, and thereby obtained some fleeting notoriety. This ship was launched in 1899, and is a first-class protected cruiser of 6,500 tons, 20,000 I.H.P., 23 knots speed, with an armament of 12 6-in. and 22 smaller guns, the weight of broadside fire being 510 lb. The Russian ships remained in harbour until threatened with bombardment in port by Admiral Uriu, when they steamed out and met their fate gallantly. After an engagement of thirty-five minutes at ranges of 5,250 to 9,800 yards with the Japanese vessels, both Russian ships returned to port, and, together with the Russian transport *Sungari*, which was also in the harbour, were sunk by their own crews. The latter were taken on board foreign warships in the harbour.

By these acts of vigour the Japanese navy have profited by the initiative conferred upon them by

TWO DECLARATIONS OF WAR 53

statesmanship, and have established a moral mastery of the situation. Following upon these events, a formal declaration of war was made by each Power on February 10 in the following terms :—

THE TSAR'S DECLARATION OF WAR

“ We proclaim to all our faithful subjects that, in our solicitude for the preservation of that peace so dear to our heart, we have put forth every effort to assure tranquillity in the Far East. To these pacific ends we declared our assent to the revision, proposed by the Japanese Government, of the agreements existing between the two empires concerning Korean affairs. The negotiations initiated on this subject were, however, not brought to a conclusion, and Japan, not even awaiting the arrival of our last reply and the proposals of our Government, informed us of the rupture of the negotiations and of diplomatic relations with Russia.

“ Without previously notifying that the rupture of such relations implied the beginning of warlike action, the Japanese Government ordered its torpedo boats to make a sudden attack on our squadron in the outer roadstead of the fortress of Port Arthur. After receiving the report of our Viceroy on the subject, we at once commanded Japan's challenge to be replied to by arms.

“ While proclaiming this our resolve, we, in unshakable confidence in the help of the Almighty, and firmly trusting in the unanimous readiness of all our faithful subjects to defend the Fatherland together with ourselves, invoke God's blessing on our glorious forces of the army and navy.”

THE MIKADO'S DECLARATION OF WAR

“ We, by the Grace of Heaven, the Emperor of Japan, seated on the Throne occupied by the same dynasty from time immemorial, do hereby make

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proclamation to all our loyal and brave subjects as follows :—

“ We hereby declare war against Russia, and we command our army and navy to carry on hostilities against her in obedience to duty and with all their strength, and we also command all our competent authorities to make every effort in pursuance of their duties and in accordance with their powers to attain the national aim, with all the means within the limits of the law of nations.

“ We have always deemed it essential to international relations, and made it our constant aim to promote the pacific progress of our Empire in civilisation, to strengthen our friendly ties with other States, and to establish a state of things which would maintain enduring peace in the Extreme East, and assure the future security of our Dominion without injury to the rights and interests of other Powers.

“ Our competent authorities have also performed their duties in obedience to our will, so that our relations with all Powers have been steadily growing in cordiality.

“ It is thus entirely against our expectation that we have unhappily come to open hostilities against Russia.

“ The integrity of Korea is a matter of gravest concern to this Empire, not only because of our traditional relations with that country, but because the separate existence of Korea is essential to the safety of our realm.

“ Nevertheless, Russia, in disregard of her solemn treaty pledges to China and of her repeated assurances to other Powers, is still in occupation of Manchuria, and has consolidated and strengthened her hold upon those provinces, and is bent upon their final annexation.

“ And since the absorption of Manchuria by Russia would render it impossible to maintain the integrity of China, and would, in addition, compel the abandonment of all hope for peace in the Extreme East, we determined, in those circumstances, to settle the

question by negotiations and to secure thereby a permanent peace.

"With that object in view our competent authorities by our order made proposals to Russia, and frequent conferences were held during the last six months.

"Russia, however, never met such proposals in a spirit of conciliation, but by her wanton delays put off the settlement of the serious question, and by ostensibly advocating peace on the one hand, while she was on the other extending her naval and military preparations, sought to accomplish her own selfish designs.

"We cannot in the least admit that Russia had from the first any serious or genuine desire for peace. She has rejected the proposals of our Government. The safety of Korea is in danger. The interests of our Empire are menaced. The guarantees for the future which we have failed to secure by peaceful negotiations can now only be obtained by an appeal to arms.

"It is our earnest wish that by the loyalty and valour of our faithful subjects peace may soon be permanently restored and the glory of our Empire preserved."

It is only natural that the striking success of the Japanese torpedo flotilla on the night of February 8 should have produced a very great impression upon public opinion, and that a tendency should be already manifest to depreciate battleships and all their works. There is no doubt that the *jeune école* in France, the school of the late Admiral Aube and M. Charmes, will be in ecstasies at the apparent fulfilment of all its prognostications, and one may feel confident that the *porte parole* of this school, that excellent little periodical, the *Marine Française*, will not fail to profit by this realisation of its hopes. It may also be admitted that many circumstances have conspired to cause the torpedo and the torpedo menace to be somewhat underrated even by men of great experience and competence in England. There has been no real and decisive war-proof to strike

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the balance between the claims of torpedo fanatics and the counter-claims of their opponents. It is very improper for a young lieutenant to send an admiral to the bottom of the sea by torpedoing the flagship at manœuvres, and many a young naval officer has turned away, when his claim has been refused by the umpires, and with a shrug of the shoulders has comforted himself with the thought that the result would have been different if it had been "the real thing."

Torpedo warfare offers limitless opportunities for the display of all those qualities of nerve and audacity which distinguished young naval officers in the countless cutting-out exploits of former wars, and, as Port Arthur has shown, the result of success may prove almost equal to that of victory in a fleet action in the open sea. Therefore the results of the Japanese blow at Port Arthur will very properly cause torpedo enthusiasts to set to work with redoubled zeal to perfect both the means at their disposal and the methods of its employment in war.

But it is at least as important to study this question without enthusiasm, in the coldest light of reason, and to ask ourselves whether Port Arthur has proved anything that was not known before. There is surely not one single officer in our navy who is not aware of the increased range, accuracy, and destructive power of the latest type of torpedo; there is surely not one who would care to risk some fourteen warships in an open roadstead, closely grouped and at anchor, with an active enemy within striking distance, unless he had been able to take the most complete and comprehensive precautions against surprise. The surprise at Port Arthur, on its technical side, proves absolutely nothing but the fact that modern science has outstripped the capacity of certain nations to make intelligent use of the new weapons.

The sequence of events appears to have been as follows. By an order emanating from St. Petersburg, the Russian squadron left port, put to sea, returned and anchored



under the protection of its shore batteries on February 4. On the 6th Japan broke off negotiations, and informed Russia of her intention to take measures to protect her own menaced interests. That meant war, and the news appeared in the *Official Messenger* the same evening, and was promptly communicated to Admiral Alexeieff. With incredible negligence the Russian squadron remained inert; all the harbour lights and beacons remained in position; no special precautions were taken, save that a patrol of three torpedo boats was sent out; all the rest of the light craft returned to port, leaving the squadron as a gift to the enemy. The night was clear, the sea calm, and the moon was shining. Of what followed we know the material points. The Japanese appeared, and the first indication of their presence was the shock of one of their torpedoes.

Not satisfied with the faults they had already committed, the Russian ships turned on their search-lights, better silhouetting their outlines in the darkness, and enabling the Japanese to take better aim. Not a ship or a boat moved out before dawn, and this fine squadron thus deliberately offered itself up a passive victim to a certain doom. Very naturally, the Japanese made choice of the finest vessels, and kept on hammering away with the result that we see; there is nothing to cause astonishment, save the comparative slightness of the Russian losses.

Battleships, as engines of war, stand precisely now where they stood before, neither anything better nor anything worse. After all, why were the Russian ships not at sea? Because they were, strategically speaking, afraid of the Japanese navy. And why? Because of the assumed superiority of the enemy's battleships; therefore, one might claim with perfect justice that it was the direct threat of the superior battleships that caused the Russian squadron to suffer the disaster we know. Yet we do not cry down the credit of torpedo craft for that reason. In the art of war there is a place for everything, and everything has its place.

CHAPTER VI¹

THE LESSON OF PORT ARTHUR

THE result of Russian unreadiness for hostilities has entailed such a terrible calamity upon the Pacific squadron that it is worth while, during the momentary lull in the operations, to revert once more to the question and to ask ourselves, with the incidents of 1899 fresh in our minds, whether we are seriously armed against similar disasters.

Although nothing can excuse the carelessness of the Russian commander at Port Arthur, the determining cause of the naval surprise was undoubtedly the failure of the Tsar's advisers at St. Petersburg, and of the Viceroy of the Far East, to issue the necessary warning to the fighting services. Everything in the Russian arrangements betokened profound peace. The main squadron of battleships lay out in an exposed anchorage, where it was open to and invited attack. The guardships at Chemulpo, isolated and far from support, lay peacefully at anchor; elsewhere, the Volunteer Fleet steamers and other Russian vessels were pursuing their normal duties as though Japan had ceased to exist. It was not until the report of the attack on the night of February 8 reached St. Petersburg that, in the words of the Tsar's manifesto, "we at once commanded Japan's challenge to be replied to by arms."

Nothing justified this childlike confidence. The negotiations had been steadily pointing, every day with

¹ From an article in *The Times* of February 18, 1904.

greater clearness, to the outbreak of hostilities, and on the 6th Mr. Kurino had made a communication which left no possible doubt of the intentions of Japan. This communication was frank and explicit ; it was published in the *Official Messenger* on the 6th, and the Japanese Minister then withdrew. The only complaint open to Russia to make is that Mr. Kurino did not name the point of attack and the precise hour at which operations would begin. This is a convention of peace manœuvres, but it is not war. Still nothing was changed, no orders were sent, and, with an *insouciance* as fatal as incomprehensible, the Colossus waited to be struck. It had not long to wait. The seizure of the initiative by Japan is a matter that more directly concerns the statesman than the fighting services. It is the readiness of Japan and the decision to take rapid action that stands out as an example for us to follow.

A surprise in operations on land can rarely, if ever, affect more than a part of the army attacked, since national armies extend over a large expanse of country, and the final result of the campaign is not necessarily much affected by the fate of a fraction of the army of operations. At sea things are different, and five minutes of negligence before hostilities commence can make all the difference between the gain or loss of the command of the sea. A few days ago the Russian Pacific squadron, containing most of the best Russian battleships afloat, although slightly weaker than its enemy, in the proportion of eleven to fourteen, could still aspire, by audacity and hard fighting, to win a great victory or to perish gloriously. Now it is partially a wreck, its best ships lying crippled upon the mud and rocks of Port Arthur, others sunk, burnt, damaged, or destroyed. It has not won a victory, it has not sunk an enemy's ship, and, the *Variag* apart, it has not perished gloriously.

Appalling is the result and far-reaching the effect of unreadiness at sea. "He who has only land troops fights only with one hand ; he who has a fleet as well

fight with two." That was said by Peter the Great, the father of the Russian fleet, who must turn uneasily in his grave at the disaster which has befallen the service he loved. It is not only the loss of a squadron, the loss of prestige, and the first step towards the loss of the command of the sea ; it is the loss to Russia in East Asia of one hand, and a grave disadvantage entailed upon the army by the loss of that support upon which it had the right to count. The loss of an army to a military empire of 130 million souls is the loss of an army and nothing more ; the men can be replaced, the disaster retrieved. But ships lost can but rarely be replaced during a war, be it of unusual duration, even if national resources afford, as Russia's do not, the utmost facilities for naval construction and armament. The hand, even if it be considered but the left, is amputated.

Far from thinking the Japanese attack on the night of February 8, two full days after the announcement of the intention to take action, was an exception, or a deviation from tradition and precedent, we should rather count ourselves fortunate if our enemy, in the next naval war we have to wage, does not strike two days before blazoning forth his intention, instead of two days after. The tremendous and decisive results of success for the national cause are enough to break down all the restraining influences of the code of international law and Christian morality. How many instances could not be given of acts done and actions accomplished in past history which tear into shreds all the checks and counterchecks upon the play of national passions, propounded or settled over tables covered with green baize by jurists and academicians of the highest repute ?

The question then arises whether it is possible to make such provision in the system of government that the grave risk of naval surprise may be reduced to its lowest terms, or entirely removed. Politically considered, Russia and Japan were on equal terms, since in one country a legislature did not exist, and in the

other it was not consulted. The natural disadvantage of democracy contending with autocracy was not, therefore, in question. It is quite evident that if the government of one country is empowered to declare and wage war *proprio motu*, and if the other has to assemble Parliament, vote supplies, pass on its enactments to a higher Chamber, and finally obtain the sanction of the Chief of the State, the second of these two countries is almost disarmed before a sudden onset.

It was for this reason that Article 8 of the French *Loi Constitutionnelle* of February 25, 1875, laid down that "Le Président de la République . . . dispose de la force armée"; and though it went on to say that war could not be declared without the assent of the two Chambers, nothing was said or done to detract from the President's duty and right of safeguarding the nation against surprise by any measures required in the interests of public safety.

Moreover, a very important understanding was long ago arrived at between French diplomacy and the fighting services. It was agreed that, when negotiations with a foreign Power became critical, diplomacy should warn the army and navy that the *période de tension politique* had come. The onus of taking defensive measures was then placed upon the competent authority, and the risk of such a disaster as has befallen Russia was avoided.

Although it is rather the action of Japan than the inaction of Russia that stands out as the great lesson for England in this tragic event, the established practice of the French democracy is one to be laid to heart. As a provision for national security it represents a *minimum*. Nothing, of course, can atone for incompetence in high quarters; against stupidity the gods themselves fight in vain. Under the British system, national security is very largely dependent upon the Prime Minister's conscience. We are now in the throes of a reform, part of which, and a very material part, will establish, in the person of the Secretary of

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the Defence Committee, a keeper of the Prime Minister's conscience in matters of defence. It is something, but it is not enough, since, if a Prime Minister has a conscience, he keeps it himself, and, if he has not, no one can keep it for him.

In order to make it impossible that such a disaster as Port Arthur may befall us in war, we cannot do better than adopt the French precept and practice, and lay it down as the right and the bounden duty of the Foreign Office to communicate the fact to the Defence Committee when negotiations have gone so far as to imperil our relations with a foreign Power. It then remains for the Committee to instruct the fighting services to adopt the necessary measures of precaution all over the globe. By no other means can we discount the danger of personal failing, whether in the Prime Minister or in his colleagues; and by these means alone can we secure the automatic working of the machinery charged with the preservation of national security. What we require is to place it out of the power of incompetence to risk great national interests, and, above all, those of a service which we have just seen fall the victim of diplomatic and governmental incapacity.

To Russia it is the loss of a fleet; to England it might be the loss of an Empire.

CHAPTER VII¹

1812 ?

WITH the sea to a great extent cleared of Russian ships, Japan is only hampered by the *embarras du choix* as concerns landing-places ; but as the two main groups of Russian forces within striking distance are at Port Arthur and on the Yalu, it is probably against these that the first operations on land will be directed. There is, however, nothing whatever at present to disclose the plans of the Japanese Staff, or to give warning of the direction of the impending blows.

The news sent by General Pflug of Japanese action in the Liautung Gulf is interesting as far as it goes. From his report of February 15 it would appear that he believes the Japanese are preparing to land at Tsinwendao to the west of the gulf, and the Russian posts on the Hsinmintun post road already report the appearance of something that may possibly be Japanese patrols near Ichahepu. The immediate effect of this alarming report was the prompt retreat of the Viceroy and his Quartermaster-General to Kharbin, where they run less risk of being cut off. When the Russian patrols have made up their minds concerning the identity of the mysterious figures observed on the post road, and have established clearly whether they are the advanced guard of a Japanese army or Manchurian ladies going to market, it will be time enough to consider their report.

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of February 13, 17, 19, and 23, 1904.

Meanwhile it seems hardly worth while to have attached such importance to mere conjecture.

It is clear that enemies are seen everywhere, or, as the Japanese say, "in every wind that blows," and that the Russians for the first time in their history are getting an attack of nerves. That is the usual result of the defensive against a maritime Power in a position to strike with both hands.

Therein lies the tremendous menace and the terrible strength of an island Power prepared for war, whose navy and army do not dribble into action in succession, but are each and all prepared to strike together with their full force, and to strike home. Naval action alone can do much ; it is the essential, but its power ceases at the shore, and decisive war—a war, that is, which compels peace—can only be waged by a maritime Power whose entire armed strength can be thrown into the balance in one formidable and united mass. If, again, this weight is multiplied by velocity, we get military momentum ; the heavier the weight, and the greater the velocity, the more resistless the blow.

Japan is taking a leaf from British practice and vastly improving upon it. We have waged many wars and have often struck hard and quick by sea, but seldom or never has our army been ready to second this action at the outbreak of war. Hence all the long, desultory, and costly wars of the past. Japan is about to show us how to wield that double-edged and mighty sword forged by union of all military effort to a common purpose. What matter if a few transports are sent to the bottom ? There are 46,000,000 Japanese behind, and why should we be less ready to sacrifice 10,000 men during attack by sea than we are to lose the same number in a battle on land ? So we see the first fleet of Japanese transports spread their wings and take flight in the wake of the warships like a flock of wild-fowl, and we can feel for the Russian fowler on the Yalu who sees them wheeling and circling round, but cannot tell whence they come nor whither they go, and

can only turn round on his own axis and curse the strength of their pinions.

The practice of Japan to-day stands as the ideal and model of national strategy for an island empire, and the nearer we can approach to it the more confidently may we anticipate the prevention of war in the wide territories under the British Crown.

There can be little doubt, Pflug's terrors apart, that a growing volume of evidence points to the speedy launching of the first considerable elements of the Japanese armada from the southern harbours of the Island Empire. How many troops were transported in the first flight, which closely followed the warships, and where all the troops were landed, is not yet fully established. All that is known for certain is that there is a strong advanced guard in occupation of the line Chemulpo-Seoul, and it is probable that this action was completed by disembarkation at other ports, in order to seize all points and positions of vantage behind which the first army to be landed can confidently assemble. Whether the Russians are right in believing that this covering army numbers, or will eventually number, 60,000 men cannot as yet be ascertained.

Success in this critical operation being now certain, the Japanese censor is beginning to relax a little the rigours of his very necessary, but very annoying, office. Correspondents are beginning to tell us of the preparations at Nagasaki, where there were on the 15th some ten large steamers capable of transporting¹ a Japanese division at war strength; and, if other southern ports, including those of the Inland Sea, are similarly well equipped, we are about to witness a striking instance of the power of a maritime nation to despatch a great military expedition over-sea, with all resources intelligently combined to further the pursuit of national aims.

Where this armada will touch land is still a matter of conjecture. The correspondents and the foreign

¹ It is believed that the Japanese allot transport at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons gross per man for a division.

press favour the Yalu, or some point nearer the Liautung Peninsula ; but the drift-ice appears to offer almost insuperable obstacles to landing operations in the extreme north of the Liautung Gulf and the Bay of Korea at this moment, especially at the points where much fresh water comes down to the sea.

Such change as there is in the naval situation is in favour of Japan. M. Pavloff has, indeed, supplied his government with a new version of the Chemulpo fight, which claims that two Japanese vessels were lost and a large number of men killed and wounded during the engagement ; but, as the Minister was at Seoul when the action took place, his evidence is of little value beside the Japanese official account, which has clearly stated that no such losses occurred. There is a strong detachment of the Japanese navy off Fusan, doubtless waiting for Captain Reitzenstein, temporarily in naval command at Vladivostok ; and as this detachment probably consists of four armoured cruisers, and can enlist the guardships and light craft posted in observation off Tsushima and on each side of the straits, the career of the Vladivostok cruisers is likely to be brief if their enterprising commander steers a course to the south.

After dallying in the vicinity, if not at the port, of Jibuti for the best part of a month, the squadron under Admiral Virenius has retraced its steps and is on the point of returning to the Baltic. This squadron includes the battleship *Oslabya*, the cruisers *Aurora* and *Dmitri-Donskoi*, the Volunteer Fleet steamers *Orel*, *Saratoff*, and *Smolensk*, and eleven torpedo-boats and destroyers, exclusive of one under repair at Alexandria.

Synchronising as it does with the appointment of General Kuropatkin to command the army in Manchuria, this decision must be taken to betoken the abandonment for the present of all hope of recovering the command of the sea, and to indicate a fresh disposition of Russian forces and a recasting of strategical ideas.

In Russia's interest the appointment of General Kuropatkin to the command of the army of Manchuria

must be considered a measure of wisdom. The General stands higher than any other Russian officer, not only in Russian opinion, but in that of professional soldiers all the world over, and if any human agency can change the deplorable situation to Russia's advantage, Kuropatkin may be the man to do it. The glamour of Skobelev's achievements has descended upon his lieutenant, who is a past-master in the art of campaigning under difficulties of distance and climate, and is, or should be, thoroughly acquainted with all the strength and all the weakness of the Russian military position in the East. Russia possesses a small leavening of highly educated officers of ability and distinction, who are the equals of any officers in the world. Unfortunately, the distance which separates these few from the mass of regimental and departmental officers is greater than in any other army, and it is useless to make skilful plans and order elaborate movements which are over the heads of subordinates who have to execute them.

It is evident that all the plans based upon joint action by land and sea have been torn to shreds by the surprises of the past fortnight, and that the army and the requirements of land warfare now dominate the situation. Although Admiral Alexeiev remains Viceroy, we must assume that General Kuropatkin will be the real master, for otherwise his position will be impossible, and it is probably only on these terms that he would have desired to proceed to the East. General Kuropatkin will know exactly whether to take as correct the news of the *Matin* that 400,000 men will be in Manchuria in a fortnight, or that of the *Temps*, which places the effective field army available at under 70,000. In all probability the returns will disclose that the *data* supplied by *The Times* correspondent at Peking on January 21 are near the mark, and that after strong garrisons have been thrown into Port Arthur and Vladivostok and the guards on the railway strengthened, the available surplus will not represent a field army "worthy of the dignity and might of Russia."

The Russians are under less delusion now as to the strength and determination of their enemy. "Remember that the foe is brave, confident, and crafty," the Tsar tells his soldiers; "Our foe is strong," says the Viceroy in his proclamation, and his reported retirement to Kharbin proves that he thinks it.

There are signs, in fact, which may or may not be substantiated by events, that the naval disasters have induced the Tsar's military advisers to make a truly heroic resolve—namely, to have recourse to the traditional strategy of 1812, and to fall back towards the interior, laying waste the country—which belongs to China—before a Japanese advance. "The fortress of Port Arthur," we are told by the Viceroy, "having been put in a state of siege, is ready to serve Russia as an inaccessible stronghold." History, it may be parenthetically remarked, knows many strongholds, but none that are inaccessible.

This has been followed by a very significant and interesting official proclamation¹ in the Russian press on February 18. Much time, it declares, is now

¹ The text of this *communiqué* was as follows:—

"Eight days have now elapsed since all Russia was shaken with profound indignation against an enemy who suddenly broke off negotiations, and, by a treacherous attack, endeavoured to obtain an easy success in a war long desired. The Russian nation, with natural impatience, desires prompt vengeance, and feverishly awaits news from the Far East. The unity and strength of the Russian people leave no room for doubt that Japan will receive the chastisement she deserves for her treachery and her provocation of war at a time when our beloved Sovereign desired to maintain peace among all nations.

"The conditions under which hostilities are being carried on compel us to wait with patience for news of the success of our troops, which cannot occur before decisive actions have been fought by the Russian army. The distance of the territory now attacked and the desire of the Tsar to maintain peace were the causes of the impossibility of preparations for war being made a long time in advance. Much time is now necessary in order to strike at Japan blows worthy of the dignity and might of Russia, and, while sparing as much as possible the shedding of the blood of her children, to inflict just chastisement on the nation which has provoked the struggle.

"Russia must await the event in patience, being sure that our army will avenge that provocation a hundredfold. Operations on land must not be expected for some time yet, and we cannot obtain early news from the theatre of war. The useless shedding of blood is unworthy of the greatness and power of Russia. Our country displays such unity and desire for self-sacrifice on behalf of the national cause that all true news from the scene of hostilities will be immediately due to the entire nation."

necessary in order to strike at Japan blows worthy of the dignity and might of Russia, which must consequently await the event in patience. Twice in a few lines the communication repeats that the useless shedding of blood is unworthy of Russia, and it implicitly acknowledges Russia's present inability to resist the impending attack in the positions she now holds.

If this is not a distinct intimation to the Russian people of the Tsar's intention to repeat 1812 at the expense of Japan, it is devoid of all sense and meaning. It may be frankly admitted that a resort to the traditional national strategy of the past, should it follow this announcement, would not be devoid of elements of grandeur. It would open out a new horizon and change at a stroke the entire complexion and character of the war. What memories are not entwined round the fateful incidents of Moscow and Beresina! Will a Japanese Fezensac or Segur recount, for the benefit of their descendants, the horrors of another mid-winter retreat, the wasting away in Manchurian snows of another *grande armée*, the ruin of another Empire and another Emperor? There is not, let it be said at once, the slightest chance that Japan will repeat the fatal errors of Napoleon. First of all, she has no Bonaparte; secondly, she has no desire to date her Imperial decrees from the Kremlin; and, thirdly, she has no Spain to burn her military candle at the other end, no Prussia or Austria to fall upon her when she wavers, no implacable England to close to her the seas. Is it not rather Russia herself who must, by force of circumstances, incur the same disabilities from which Napoleon suffered? If Russia proposes to abandon Manchuria, or a part of it, with or without an Eastern Borodino, that is her affair; the Japanese object is attained, and China will be installed in her rightful position. But if the Russian strategists think their enemy will follow them up from Kharbin to Baikal and from Baikal to the Ural Mountains, why, we are in the realms of phantasy, for 1812 has gone by and the days of the Grand Army have been lived.

If, then, the decision has been arrived at gradually to withdraw such field army as Russia can at present collect before the superior force of Japan, it will be clearly seen that in this case necessity has been the mother of strategic invention, and that what has been announced as high policy is, in fact, nothing better than an act performed under compulsion. The Russian forces are greatly scattered, while the blow impending from the impenetrable gloom of the sea paralyses decision by reason of its unknown force and uncertain direction. In the interest of Russia it is an act of wisdom to unite these scattered fragments and avoid detached fighting in order to escape defeats which would affect the spirit of the troops. That is not quite the phrasing of the official *communiqué*, but the meaning is the same. But a fault in the initial deployment of an army is not easily repaired after contact with the enemy, and the deployment of the army in East Asia has become faulty, not entirely from want of prescience in the distribution of such forces as exist, but largely by reason of the total and unexpected failure of the Russian navy to exercise the slightest influence upon events. All the vast accumulation of troops, stores, and impedimenta intended for action in a given set of circumstances cannot rapidly be transferred to another point and be made available for other needs. The Russians are watching the Yalu with almost painful anxiety ; it is impossible, reports General Pflug, to cross the river on the ice below Shakedtse, and one almost hears him add, "Thank heaven !" He has no idea where the enemy may be ; reports, he says, are contradictory and scarce, but he feels sure that Yuanshihkai's troops are being sent to Sinchufu and Kupantse, and the news does not appear to cause him any pleasure. It is bad enough to have a strong and confident enemy preparing to attack in front or flank at unknown points in uncertain strength, but it is worse to think of the rightful owners of Manchuria manifesting an intention to mass troops so inconveniently in the rear.

The tacit admission of the inferiority of the Russian military position in East Asia, conveyed by the significant proclamation of February 18, gives the first indication that the Russian Government realises the facts of the situation. That, at least, is something to the good. It hints that Russia will not face the loss of military prestige entailed by the possible annihilation of her Eastern army piece by piece, and that she intends her troops to fall back upon their reinforcements, gathering strength like a spring that is compressed, until their numbers are superior to those of Japan, when they will exact a long-delayed vengeance. It is a great resolve, and it is worthy of Russia, but its success depends upon the will of the enemy.

Port Arthur, with the ruin of a mighty squadron, is left in isolation anything but splendid; freed from the harassing attentions of a Russian field army, the Japanese will sit down calmly before the Russian naval arsenal and reduce it at their leisure. The transfer of the whole Pacific littoral and its Russian fortress and fleet to Japan as the result of a first campaign is all that the most sanguine spirit could either have desired or expected, and no other result can ensue if Russia adopts, so far as lies in her power, the policy of 1812, suitable enough for other days, other conditions, other frontiers, and other enemies.

That this momentous resolution, could it be carried into effect, would contain elements of advantage for Russia and of eventual danger for Japan we need not be concerned to deny. In a long drawn-out war of exhaustion Russia is invincible to attack from eastward. But can Russia herself afford to wage a war of exhaustion? Armies of a quarter of a million men are not kept in the field on a permanent footing, or new fleets built for a song.

A war of exhaustion! That is what this announcement portends, if it is not deliberately concocted to deceive. It is a mid-winter's madness, since, if the Japanese refuse to run amok through the deserts of

East Asia, and calmly begin to reduce the great Russian fortress, no Tsar and no Russian army can refuse to move forward to its relief. How can a great army stand still with ordered arms while its comrades are calling aloud for succour? It would become the laughing-stock of Europe and the mock of Asia.

The adoption of the spirit of 1812 in the future conduct of the war against Japan is incompatible with the retention of Port Arthur as a fixed point round which all the subsequent operations of the Russian field army must fatally revolve till the fortress falls.

CHAPTER VIII¹

PRELIMINARY OPERATIONS, FEBRUARY 15—MARCH 7

It is now known that an advanced guard of four battalions accompanied the division of cruisers under Admiral Uriu, which reached Chemulpo on the night of the 8th and disposed of the Russian ships in port on the following day. Joined with the Japanese troops already established at or near Seoul, this gave a handy little force of some four or five thousand men to seize and overawe the capital of Korea and establish order and security at this populous centre and focus of intrigue. This prompt and audacious measure was justified by success, and the surprise of the Port Arthur squadron, which occurred simultaneously, cleared the air and gave the required security for further operations. Very wisely, the Japanese decided not to risk their transports in the north of the Yellow Sea until the danger at Port Arthur was scotched. The greater part of the first section of the army of invasion was directed upon Fusan and Masanpo in the first instance, the destination being altered when the success gained at Port Arthur was realised ; it was realised with much promptness, and every advantage was taken of the change in the situation.

As events have turned out, the 12th Division, which was the first to land at Chemulpo, might have been directed upon this port at the heels of the advanced

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of February 24 and 27, March 1 and 9, 1904.

guard, and a week or so have been thereby saved. But it was not possible for the most sanguine to expect that the immediate menace of the Russian navy would be dispelled in less than twelve hours after the firing of the first torpedo, and the whole operation of troop transport seems to have been planned with a very fair admixture of prudence and audacity, no serious liberties being taken until the situation justified greater boldness. *The Times* correspondent on board the *Haimun*¹ names only two divisions, the 12th and the Guard, of which the 12th alone had arrived when *The Times* steamer left Chemulpo; but he adds that another division is following, and it may be regarded as certain that transports no sooner clear their cargoes than they return for more.

The Japanese 12th Division has its headquarters at Kokura, and its troops are drawn from the north-eastern section of the island of Kiushiu, which lies to the south-west of the Inland Sea. One of its battalions forms the normal detachment at Seoul, and this unit has doubtless become embodied in its division once more. The 12th Division includes the 8th, 9th, 37th, and 38th regiments of infantry, formed in two brigades; a regiment of cavalry of three squadrons, an artillery regiment of thirty-six guns, an engineer battalion, and a complete provision of ammunition and supply columns, field telegraph, and hospitals, being in these respects provided in the same manner as other divisions.

One may take the ration strength of a Japanese division at 19,000 men, and the combatant strength at

¹ The enterprise of *The Times* in fitting out the *Haimun* with equipment for wireless telegraphy, and the admirable manner in which Captain Lionel James and his staff applied this new machinery to the uses of war correspondence for the first time, met with a very unfavourable reception on the part of the belligerents. During the second week in April the following circular was communicated to the Powers: "Le lieutenant de Sa Majesté l'Empereur en Extrême-Orient vient de faire la déclaration suivante: 'Dans le cas où des bâtiments neutres en vue des côtes de la presque île de Kwantoun ou dans la sphère d'action des forces navales russes, seraient retenus, ayant à leur bord des correspondants des journaux, communiquant à l'ennemi des renseignements au moyen d'appareils perfectionnés non prévus encore par les conventions, ces correspondants seraient considérés comme espions, et les navires portant ces appareils capturés et retenus comme prises de guerre.'"

14,000 sabres and rifles, with thirty-six guns; but it is possible that a reserve brigade belonging to each division will sooner or later join its parent unit, in which case the combatant strength would be raised to 20,000 men. As each Japanese division is approximately of the same constitution it will be unnecessary to refer to these figures again, but concerning the reserve brigades and their disposition with the armies of operation there is a very wide margin for surprises.

The Guard Division has no special territorial attachment, being recruited throughout the army by special measures. It includes the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Guard regiments of infantry, and is constituted like the 12th as regards accessories, except that it has a railway battalion in addition.

In the 12th Division territory there is the Yura fortress artillery regiment of twelve companies, from which siege artillery could be provided, if necessary, to oppose any heavy guns the Russians may have on the Yalu.

If all three divisions have been landed, there may be 58,000 Japanese ready to advance upon the Yalu, with 108 guns; but *The Times* correspondent rather seems to indicate that part at least of the artillery is not ashore, and that, if the conditions serve, an endeavour will be made to seize Chinampo as an advanced base. This town, on the Pingyang inlet, inside Tatung Bay, was used by the Japanese during the war with China, and the present situation of affairs bears some resemblance to that of August, 1894, when the 3rd and 5th Divisions concentrated towards the Yalu under Yamagata. We are, however, only permitted to see a corner of the stage. The Japanese are not likely to under-estimate the force on the Yalu or to lose sight of the overwhelming interest of a first success; the blow which will before long be struck in the north of Korea will hardly fall until success is, humanly speaking, assured.

The paralysis that has overwhelmed the Russian

navy at this moment is disastrous for its cause. The Japanese are singeing the Viceroy's beard with a vengeance, and propose to shift their base northward as the army advances, just as if the Russian navy had ceased to exist. There is no reason why they should not hope to seize Chinampo, and then, after gaining the line of the Yalu, utilise Antung as soon as the break-up of the ice permits. Their line of communications passes not by land, but by sea, with this alternative—that, even if the relics of the Russian squadron display a sudden return of activity, and even win a temporary success, nothing is lost, since the land route remains.

For later operations Niuchwang possesses too many advantages to be long ignored when the ice has cleared off, but the first business in hand is to dispose of the Russians on the Yalu, and then to close in upon Port Arthur and to draw the line of investment so tightly on the land side that other operations may proceed without any interference from this quarter.

What course the Russians on the Yalu will now pursue becomes the centre of all interest. A victory here, although promising nothing decisive, would be a great encouragement; but, unless the Russian numbers are much greater and the Japanese tactics much worse than we have warrant to credit, victory is at least problematical. A retreat without fighting would accord with the declarations made in the Russian press, but the moral effect of retreat, without striking a blow, from a position occupied for weeks past would be almost as serious as defeat. If, again, the Russians hope to fall back fighting and repeat some of the earlier incidents of 1812, we may be permitted to doubt whether the Russian forces possess the necessary skill and mobility to escape the embrace of their active foe when once they become seriously engaged. A Russian retreat to Liauyang would entail a withdrawal from Niuchwang and the lower Liau and the severance of communications with Port Arthur, whose garrison would be driven in upon its works. The Russian proceedings on the Yalu

will therefore be a test of their strength and intentions, and events impending will give the general bearings of the strategy of the campaign.

The *Militär-Wochenblatt* very unkindly chooses the present moment to repeat and confirm, with the customary wealth of detail to which German military criticism is addicted, all that was said in *The Times* before the war broke out of the insecurity and inadequacy of the Russian line of communications. It would have been kinder of the *Wochenblatt* to have made its pitiless analysis before Russia was irretrievably committed, since more attention might have been paid to its conclusions by St. Petersburg than was given to those of English critics. Working out its figures as an academical exercise, the German periodical concludes that, with seven trains a day, and all circumstances favouring, the Russian numbers in the Far East will be increased by 75,000 men between February 10 and April 4, a period of about eight weeks, or at the rate of about 1,400 men a day, including the necessary *impedimenta*.

It is not a particularly exhilarating estimate even as it stands, but as a serious contribution to the study of the practical problem it is of no immediate value. It is improbable that seven trains a day can be relied on in the present condition of the line, and in view of the general situation, for the transport of troops. The closing of the sea and the declaration of a blockade, which cannot now be long delayed, will also throw a strain upon the line, which must for some time to come prove very severe. Everything entailing considerable bulk, whether for the support of the army, the navy, the garrisons, or the civil population, has hitherto reached the Russians in East Asia by way of the sea. This door is now closed, and as no sort of preparation has been made throughout the Viceroy's command to meet this situation, and merchants have made no attempt to lay in the necessary stocks against lean months, Russia is faced by a crisis of unusual proportions and extraordinary difficulty.

If the Russian preparations by land and sea had been in accordance with such facts and figures as official Russia allows to see the light, and in accordance also with the reports that have conceivably misled the Tsar, then we might, indeed, have expected to see Russian arms throw back the "insolent foe" into the sea. But every single page of the war hitherto has been a revelation of Russian incompetence, mismanagement, and misconduct, and we seem to be carried back to 1878, and to remember the terrible disillusion of the reigning Tsar, who was compelled to arrest the inquiry into the wholesale defalcations at that period, owing to the influential personages whose names were found to be inextricably involved in the scandals.

We were bound, for want of proof to the contrary and in order to keep on the safe side, to accept the *prima facie* evidence of Russian official statements; we were bound, when Kuropatkin himself visited East Asia and declared all to be ready, to think at least that all was not unready. If Japan finds that she has an easier task than she thought, it is so much to the good; better, at least, to over-estimate an enemy than the reverse. "People are trying to intimidate us with phantoms," wrote the *Novoe Vremya* three weeks ago, in reviewing the warnings of the English press, but anything more unpleasantly solid than the Japanese phantom has never crossed Russia's path. One is forcibly reminded of Thiers's historic exclamation on being informed of the strength of the Prussian army before 1870:—"Allons donc! Ce sont là des phantasmagories! Si ces chiffres étaient vrais, il faudrait désespérer du sort de la France!"

Phantom or phantasmagoria, the parallel is striking, and one can only hope, in Russia's interest, that the awakening may be less bitter than it was to France.

Where the weight of the first blow will fall still remains a secret, but the scouts of the two armies in Northern Korea are in touch between Anju and Pingyang, and this part of the theatre of war remains the

most probable scene of the first serious encounters. At present, however, we only know for certain of one division ashore at Chemulpo, and of two others which were following to the same point, but may have been diverted further north. Whether Gensan has or has not been occupied by the Japanese in force there is no certain proof, nor have we as yet any sign of the direction given to the transports conveying the succeeding échelons of the Japanese army to the mainland.

Although we can none of us pretend to have penetrated to the back of the mind of the Japanese, or to say what they will or will not do in given circumstances, there can be no doubt that, judging from the facts before us, the clearing up of the situation on the Yalu is the first military interest of the moment. The Japanese army has never yet encountered a European foe; however confident of success the Japanese may be individually, the prudent statesmen who direct their councils are not likely to fail to take into full account the tremendous moral results of a first success. Here is a Russian force on the Yalu separated by great distances from the other fractions of the Russian army; here, on the other side, is the whole mass of amphibious force fit and ready to strike. The chance of a great initial success is altogether too great to be disregarded. It is a gift from the gods. Behind the Yalu is the very strong position on the Motienling; every yard of it is known to the Japanese. If a combined attack by sea and land in overwhelming strength can hope to grip and destroy the Russian force on the Yalu, it would be flying in the face of fortune to neglect the opportunity.

The world audience that has watched the first scene of the Eastern drama with such absorbing interest is, however, becoming a little weary of the long interval between the acts. Even the music of the naval orchestra at Port Arthur ceases to fix attention, and a petty wrangle at the happily named Pingyang attracts but little notice. When will the curtain ring up to the

next act? First, it seems clear that the rapid collapse of the Russian navy was altogether unexpected, and that a longer interval was allowed for the decision of the contest at sea than the event has warranted. The Japanese, like many Englishmen, regarded the result of the maritime contest with no little anxiety, since they had no actual experience of their new battleships in action. They therefore adopted a prudent course in their army plans, and, only risking a small force at Chemulpo while the question of the command of the sea was still in abeyance, prepared the chief landing at the southern ports of Korea. Such troops as were landed and proceeded to Seoul by the land route could not reach the Korean capital much before the beginning of March, and though a part seems to have been diverted to Chemulpo by sea when the extent of the naval successes became manifest, it is believed that some troops are still plodding along these poor roads and are finding the march a trying one.

The winter has been of somewhat exceptional severity; the ice covers a wide expanse of sea in front of Vladivostok; Chinampo is not expected to be free until March 14; the Yalu about the same date; while Niuchwang may not be clear quite so soon. The weather has also been terrible, south-westerly gales having occurred between the 10th and 22nd, while a fresh storm began at the end of the following week. All these circumstances mean delay, since there are no ports in that part of the theatre of war where the next landing is desired which offer suitable facilities for disembarking troops, and part, at least, of this operation must take place on an open beach, fine weather being indispensable.

The break-up of the ice in the Yellow Sea has certainly begun, since reports to this effect have come both from Seoul and the Yalu; from Niuchwang there has been no recent report. A few days, or even hours, may at any time change the complexion of affairs, and meantime the direction of the blow remains a secret.

The settlement of affairs on the Yalu, the investment of Port Arthur, and the subsequent assembly of the main army for the general advance, is the natural course that the situation seems to require. One cannot regard the reported landing at Possiet Bay as anything serious, nor accept the somewhat imaginative conclusions that have been drawn in some quarters from this rumour. Missionaries in flight, several hundred miles from Possiet Bay, and necessarily drawing their inspiration from Russians who may have prayed that the flight of these Britons should take place in the winter, would hardly afford evidence of much value. But, apart from that, the strength of the Japanese resides in their power of concentration, and they would not be likely to attack at this distant point when a Russian army on the Yalu challenged them to battle and Port Arthur dangled such a tremendous bait before their eyes. Force attracts force, while a landing at Possiet Bay would require 30,000 men to invest Vladivostok before the rest of the army set out for Kirin across some hundreds of miles of detestable country over the worst of roads in a district devoid of supplies. But, in a way, the manner in which critics accepted the news, and drew all sorts of highly coloured pictures in their minds, is significant as showing the natural results of a diversion—even by a single missionary in flight. It may help to show us what results we may anticipate from well-directed feints in time of war.

Japan means to take Port Arthur; of that we may rest assured, since she feels it was pilfered from her by an international confidence trick in 1895, and her national pride is at stake in the attempt to get back what was her own by right of conquest. The natural base for her attack on Port Arthur is Dalny and Talienwan Bay, just as it was in 1894; and as the Russians are probably alive to the fact, we can place little credence in the reported evacuation of this position, more particularly as the advanced works of Port Arthur run up to this point. Dalny must be taken, if possible,

and the Russians driven out from the works commanding the bay ; but whether the attack will be made from the sea or the land side of the peninsula there is no evidence to show. It is only when the Port Arthur garrison has the key turned in the lock by sea and land that Niuchwang becomes a safe and useful advanced base for the main advance towards Mukden. While, then, the Japanese in Korea, now established on the line from Pingyang to Gensan, are drawing near the Yalu and serving to hold the Russians in their positions on this side, we may expect to see a strong attack upon Dalny as soon as the weather serves, and the investment of the Russians at Port Arthur completed. This appears to be the view of the Russian General Stössel, commanding the troops in the Liautung Peninsula, who, in a somewhat remarkable order of the day, informs his troops that they will have the sea on three sides of them and the enemy on the fourth side. There is, he adds, nothing to do but to fight ; and he informs the garrison that he will never give the order to surrender.

It seems rather premature to refer to a surrender before the enemy has landed to begin the attack ; and the Russians hardly require to be told that they must fight, because they cannot do otherwise. That they will have to fight, and fight hard, is certain, but they have all the advantage of position and armament, and they can be relied on to make a defence worthy of the traditions of the fine army whose honour is committed to their safe keeping.

The appearance of seven Japanese warships off Vladivostok on the morning of March 6, and the demonstration rather than bombardment which followed in the course of the afternoon, naturally led the Russians to believe that Admiral Togo had gone north, and the fact that 12-in. shells were fired afforded grounds for the belief that his battleships took part in the attack. We do not as yet know for certain whether the channel into Port Arthur is sufficiently clear¹ for the passage of

¹ For details of the blocking operations, see Chapter XVII.

battleships, while a degree of doubt still remains as to the condition of some of the Russian ships. But from such facts as have been reported, on the best evidence the nature of the case admits, it is not possible to assume that the main Russian squadron is in such hopeless case as to permit the transfer of the main Japanese squadron to a point a thousand miles distant, especially at a moment when the transport of the army is proceeding with the utmost possible despatch to points within striking distance of Port Arthur. We therefore assume that Admiral Togo remains within call, hoping for a Russian onset, but perhaps hardly expecting it.

The idea that his ships are scattered about escorting transports cannot be entertained. There is no menace to the transports save from the two Russian fortresses where lie the Russian ships, and a watch off the ports covers everything, and in the most effectual manner. So long as Admiral Togo can ensure that the best of the Russian ships do not put to sea unseen and unfought, his main task is done, and the presence of a second- or third-class cruiser and a destroyer or two with each group of transports is quite enough to meet the case of the possible evasion of some Russian destroyers during the course of a winter's night.

The Japanese squadron off Vladivostok includes, according to the Viceroy, the armoured cruisers *Idzumo* and *Yakumo*, besides other ships which his officers are unable to identify. The *Nisshin* and *Kasuga* are possibly of the number; their appearance would not be known to Russian officers, and, according to the calculation made after their arrival in Japan, they should have been fit to go to sea by the middle of February.

A later version of the story from the Russian side gives the Japanese force as one battleship with four armoured and two unarmoured cruisers, which is a much more probable estimate. This squadron approached Vladivostok from Ussuri Gulf, and steamed towards the south-eastern approach of the Eastern Bosphorus, which

leads to the entrance of the Golden Horn. At 1.25 p.m. five out of the seven ships opened fire on Forts Suvaroff and Linievitch, and upon the town and roadstead along the valley of the river Obyassneniye, the firing lasting fifty minutes, when the ships steamed off to the southward. At the same time, two Japanese destroyers examined Askold Island and the coast-line near Cape Maidel, some thirty miles distant from the fortress, and to the south-east of Ussuri Gulf. On the 7th the squadron reappeared, and at midday approached the point from which it had bombarded the town the day before ; it then left, making for the open sea.

It was hardly expected, even at St. Petersburg, that the ice would have allowed such close approach so early in the year ; and, despite the Russian account, the bombardment of the Obyassneniye valley, which lies in the most sheltered part of the ground covered by the fortifications, must have been a very unpleasant reminder of the insecurity of the fortress.

It is in this part of the town that most of the barracks are situated, and as the valley is two miles from the shore of Patroclus Bay it is certainly extraordinary that the Russian batteries should have allowed the Japanese to throw shells into the inmost recesses of the fortress with impunity and without reply. Either their guns on this side were seriously out-ranged or the guns themselves were not ready, and neither alternative is creditable to the garrison or to Russia.

It is quite clear that the action of the Japanese squadron was nothing more than a reconnaissance, since Patroclus Bay is not the point whence the most telling bombardment can be directed upon the town and harbour. Meanwhile a sense of insecurity must prevail in the town, owing to the proof given that no part of the fortress is immune from bombardment.

The central interest of this episode lies in the question whether the Russian cruiser squadron was inside Vladivostok or at sea when the enemy appeared. It seems to be believed in Tokio that Captain Reitzenstein's

cruisers put to sea on February 29; but the only evidence yet given to support this belief is a report brought by an Austrian vessel which reached Hakodate from Vladivostok some days ago, and in the interval between February 29 and March 6 the Russian cruisers may have put back. Judging from the proceedings of the Japanese vessels, one would gather that the Russian cruisers were in port; but all other evidence available points to a different conclusion. In any case, owing to the double exit from the Eastern Bosphorus, it is no easy matter to deny the Russians entrance to or exit from the harbour without a greater preponderance of force than the Japanese appear to possess. Meanwhile Admiral Makaroff, who left Kronstadt on February 16, reached Kharbin on March 4, and is probably now at Port Arthur, where he will have taken over the command from Admiral Starck, the first victim of Russia's inept diplomacy. Although everything seems possible in the Russian navy, concerted action is so plainly required by the two groups of ships that one must assume such action is in contemplation. It must be admitted, however, that it is very difficult for an Englishman to follow the train of thought of the Russians in naval problems. Here, for instance, is the *Kronstadtski Viestnik*, which seems to entertain the strangest ideas of naval strategy, and declares that the passive attitude of the fleet has immense importance, "seeing that its presence covers the right wing and rear of our army, as well as the railway connections with Port Arthur." The Russian journal claims that this passive attitude prevents a hostile landing east or west of the Liautung Peninsula, and it declares that "the despatch of the Russian fleet in search of the enemy would amount simply to leaving our coast-line at the mercy of the Japanese."

It would be difficult, in a few phrases, to sum up more concisely all that a navy is not intended to do; and, if the Kronstadt organ represents the prevailing opinion of the Russian councils at the capital, one can

hardly expect to see the Port Arthur squadron recover from its misfortunes.

A study of the events occurring almost under our eyes serves to disclose the profound and unfathomable depths which separate a maritime from a continental nation in the realms of naval strategy. The ideas of maritime war and the uses of a war fleet conveyed by the passage quoted from the Russian journal are the absolute antithesis of everything that has been thought and written and preached in England and America for the last twenty years. These Russian ideas belong to the potamic stage of the naval art ; we knew that Russia had not reached the oceanic conception, but we had no reason to suppose that she had not thought out for herself some intermediate stage which might be termed thalassic. It would seem that we were too sanguine. The difference between the British theory and that of the *Kronstadtski Viestnik* is more than a mere *querelle d'école* ; it is a fundamental divergence of spirit, principle, and action. Current events, indeed, supply a revelation of the superiority of British methods, and serve to render us deeply sensible of what we owe to the brilliant gifts of a few men of talent, to the support of the press, and to the patriotism of people and Parliament in our modern naval regeneration.

One may, with some confidence, leave contemporary history to prove or refute the thesis of the Russian naval organ by the logic of accomplished facts.



ADMIRAL MAKAROFF.



VICE-ADMIRAL HIKONOJO KAMIMURA.



CHAPTER IX¹

RUSSIAN IDEAS UPON THINGS JAPANESE

IF General Sakharoff, chief of the Russian General Staff and Minister of War *ad interim*, is correctly reported by the representative of the *Figaro*, we can only conclude that the Russian War Office is preparing for its country very serious disillusion. The general puts down the Japanese active army at 156,000 men, considers the reserve formations of little account, and does not believe that Japan can place more than 200,000 men in line of battle. Nevertheless, he thinks Russia must endeavour to assemble 400,000 at least, which is certainly a compliment to Japan, and, when asked whether the transport of such numbers will not take time, replies airily that it will take months, and adds that it does not matter.

This debonair Minister must be a refreshing personage to meet amid the prevailing gloom and uncertainty at St. Petersburg, but his optimistic views are the reverse of convincing. He does not appear to possess, or, at all events, he does not disclose, that intimate acquaintance with the military resources of Japan which one would expect from a man in his position, and he appears to undervalue the numbers of the Japanese army in a manner that would be considered unpardonable in a man of infinitely less exalted rank. We cannot presume to hope that General Sakharoff has

¹ *The Times*, March 12, 1904.

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condescended to take warning from the brief account of the Japanese army which appeared in the columns of *The Times* on December 24 last, but we may call his attention to a very careful summary of Japanese resources which the official organ of the French General Staff has recently published, since this source will not be suspected of any bias other than the desire to arrive at the truth.

The February number of the *Revue Militaire de l'Etranger* gives the strength of the mobilised active army of Japan with its reserves as 7,900 officers and 331,300 other ranks, with 70,000 horses, and, adding the figures for the dépôt and territorial armies, shows that the mobilisable resources of the Japanese army figure up to 520,000 men, 101,000 horses, and 1,368 guns.

It is, therefore, a little unkind of the Russian Minister of War to ask a Frenchman to believe that a staff which, despite all the episodes of the past few years, remains at the head of scientific research, has been culpable of such gross errors of calculation.

Not, indeed, that General Sakharoff surprises us, since there has not been any sign as yet on the Russian side that the tremendous problem confronting the nation has been considered with the requisite skill, or science, or intelligence. It is worth all this and more, since there has perhaps never been any campaign which demanded more imperiously the steady application of the best brains an army or a nation could produce in order to marshal all the facts and compute all the intricate factors of time, distance, and numbers. From the Russian side it is, or should be, pre-eminently a business calculation; it is a staff exercise of a desperately involved and complex character, demanding not only the acme of nice calculation and adjustment, but the acme of exact performance on the part of half a dozen great departments of State—Army, Navy, Finance, Railways, Interior, and Foreign Affairs—and unless every wheel of these several administrations works

smoothly and performs its allotted task, success is not only difficult but beyond hope.

One does not answer questions in the multiplication table by airy generalities, nor solve abstruse questions by saying, "Yes, it will take months, but what does it matter?" It matters a great deal, since time lost in war can never be retrieved. Distance one can regain, within limits, by a forced march, but time never. It must be confessed that one may search the Russian journals from cover to cover without finding any serious recognition of the gravity of the operations upon which Russia has embarked. "Russia," says the army mouth-piece, the *Russki Invalid*, "can find no satisfactory issue out of the present war save in Japan itself." The statement, as an enunciation of a truism, is unexceptionable, but as a step towards the desired end it does not carry one far.

The general public in Russia argues even more simply. Is not Russia the greatest Continental Power on earth? Are we not 180 millions? Have we not four million armed men? How, then, can we ever be defeated? "Q. E. D." say the Russians—but Euclid would have concluded otherwise.

No one, in England, certainly, has ever doubted the measurement of the superficial area of Russia or the numbers of her population or of her army. No one has ever seriously doubted that, taken as a whole, Russia is a solid block, and in England we yield to none in our admiration of Russian valour, constancy, and patriotism. But none of these assets or virtues are in question to-day. The question is how Russia, 5,000 miles from the Pacific, with the sea closed and a single line of rail as her sole means of communication, proposes to place and keep in the field an army capable of defeating half a million or more Japanese, well-armed and organised on scientific principles, close to their own country and backed by a patriotic population of nearly 50 millions of people. How is the Russian camel to pass through the eye of the Trans-Siberian needle? The Russian

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solution is to expatiate on the size of the camel's hump, ignoring the fact that the larger the hump the less the chance for the camel and the greater the strain on the eye of the needle. Accepting General Sakharoff's statement that 400,000 men will be placed in the field, we should be disposed to agree with him on one point—namely, that their concentration will take months.

No one can pretend to make an accurate estimate of the *rendement* of the Trans-Siberian without having all the *data* at disposal, together with frequent reports of the condition of the traffic at Lake Baikal, and throughout the line from day to day. But, judging from such information as we possess, it seems doubtful whether 400,000 Russians can be put in the field in East Asia much before the end of the year, and when the navigation closes again on the Amur, at the end of the autumn, it is more than doubtful whether this army can be properly supplied unless the traffic on the railway can be doubled at least. There are plenty of sheep in Mongolia, and there is corn in Manchuria, while the millet-stalks are good enough provender for horses; but an army 400,000 strong, and constantly engaged, requires, as we have lately had good occasion to learn, an immense stock of supplies and stores of all kinds, let alone fuel for the engines, for warming each carriage in the winter, and for keeping the ships in condition to fight.

No one, in Japan certainly, believes that it is materially possible for Russia to keep an army of this strength in Manchuria, the conditions being as they are, and the entire military policy of the last ten years in Japan has aimed at making a certainty of the defeat of Russia, taking into consideration not only what Russian force there was in East Asia, but what reinforcements could be brought up and fed after war was declared. The Japanese calculations may prove to have been right or wrong, but, such as they are, they represent the reasoned opinion of the best men in the country. Japan has had this single national object before her for

ten years, to the exclusion of almost every other serious interest ; and when the hour struck, and the period of national reorganisation was completed, the inevitable war began.

To-day, March 12, General Kuropatkin leaves the capital for the front, and, judging by the time taken by Admiral Makaroff to reach his destination, the General Commanding-in-Chief should reach Mukden before the end of the month. So far as one can gather from the echoes which reach London of the views of Kuropatkin and his staff, the Japanese force at Pingyang is not regarded as a serious army of operations ; it is thought that only 40,000 men have been landed in Korea, and that the Pingyang troops are only intended to act as a containing force, to cover Korea and hold the Russians on the Yalu. "If the Japanese cross the Yalu," declares Colonel Vannovsky, late Military Attaché at Tokio, "it will be only to satisfy public opinion in Tokio." As to the main army of Japan, it is thought that this is still in Japanese ports, and that its onset is deterred by the dread of the "fleets in being." Such are the strange views which prevail in Russia's capital at the opening of one of the most momentous campaigns of her history.

CHAPTER X

JAPAN'S STRATEGICAL PROBLEM

WHEN the preliminary operations now in progress are concluded, and the Japanese are firmly established on the mainland, a strategical problem of the utmost importance and complexity will claim attention. If the Russians have decided to fall back upon Kharbin and there await the assembly of an army "worthy of the dignity and might of Russia" before moving forward to drive the enemy into the sea, the question arises, What will be the best course for the Japanese to pursue? It is the turning point of the war, and weighty results attend upon resolves.

Accepting the estimate of the Peking correspondent of *The Times*, which has secured the general adhesion of the best authorities in Europe, that there were not more than a nominal strength of 150,000 Russian troops available at the outbreak of war east of Lake Baikal, we must first see what strength the Russian field army will stand at after satisfying the necessary requirements of garrisons and railway defence. Port Arthur a short time ago held an estimated garrison of 25,000 men, while there must be not less than 10,000 men of the navy within the fortress. It is therefore questionable whether the Russian military authorities would care to increase the garrison remaining to any great extent. Vladivostok will not be safe with a smaller garrison than 20,000 men, since it will be open to attack in force from seaward when the ice clears off; therefore the two

fortresses absorb at least 45,000 men of the army of East Asia.

A withdrawal to Kharbin reduces the length of railway to be protected to an approximate 1,000 miles from the Trans-Baikal territory by Khailar and Kharbin to Vladivostok. The necessary guard for the line must be dependent upon the nature and frequency of the attacks to which it becomes exposed when the Japanese preparations for wrecking it begin to mature; but thirty men per mile throughout is a moderate estimate for efficient protection, on the assumption that strong posts would be maintained at the chief bridges and stations and the line only patrolled in places where damage done could easily be repaired. There are, besides, many obligatory garrisons to be maintained in the chief towns of Manchuria, just as there are in India in time of war; but if we put against this drain the volunteers and colonists, who would be placed in line at a moment of crisis, we may assume that the one will balance the other. Lastly, there is the deduction to be made for non-effectives owing to sickness and other causes, which would probably mount up to a high figure under the climatic conditions prevailing, and could be safely put at ten per cent. These deductions would reduce the field strength eventually available by 90,000 men, and would have lowered the strength of the field army to 60,000 men on February 8.

From Niuchwang, the natural advanced sea-base of the Japanese, to Kharbin, the distance is roughly 400 miles, and in view of the inferiority of the roads and of the small prospect of the immediate usefulness of the railway, a great army would take at least seven weeks to reach Kharbin if it encountered no opposition. Allowing, for the purpose of the argument, another fortnight from the present date for the assembly of the Japanese army at Niuchwang, Kharbin could not be reached until the middle of May.

The next question is what strength this army must be to engage the Russians with a reasonable prospect of

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success ; or, in other words, how many additional troops can the Russians bring up between February 8 and May 14, a period of nearly fourteen weeks ?

According to the calculations of the *Militär-Wochenblatt*, and on the basis of seven trains a day, the figure would be 183,000, but this estimate is excessive, since six trains a day are unlikely to be surpassed under present conditions, and a proportion of these must be devoted to supplies and material of war ; if we allow that 800 men reach Kharbin daily we shall probably be reasonably liberal. Presuming that the despatch of reinforcements began a month before the outbreak of war, this would mean a reinforcement of nearly 76,000 men, which, joined to the 60,000 already available, would give a field army of nearly 140,000 Russians by the middle of May. In order, therefore, to make sure of victory at Kharbin, and in view of the fact that she might have to carry out costly attacks against entrenched positions and execute concurrently a number of secondary operations, Japan must be in a position to place 250,000 combatants at this point by the middle of May, and if the effort is above her strength, or the result of the first actions proves that a larger force is required, she would be wiser to refrain from embarking upon the adventure.

The alternative line of advance, from some point on the coast near Vladivostok, is slightly shorter, but the railway terminates in the Russian fortress, the country is more difficult, the communications bad, less aid and fewer supplies would be obtained from the native population on the line of march, while the siege of Port Arthur is not covered by the operations of the field army as it is by an advance from the side of Niuchwang. If Japan can leave a force to invest or besiege Port Arthur, detail troops to guard the communications on the main line of advance, and still deploy 250,000 combatants at Kharbin within seven weeks' time, the enterprise is not absolutely forbidden, considered as a stroke isolated from after consequences. A serious

breakdown on the Russian railway from any cause, or a success in the field entailing a disaster to the Russian arms, would diminish the difficulties in proportion to the success achieved, but neither can be calculated upon in the establishment of the plan of operations.

The estimate of 140,000 men for the Russian field army by the middle of May is necessarily only an approximation. The Russian estimates, generally based upon a total absence of all serious consideration of the elements of time and space, suggest a far higher figure; on the other hand, Japanese opinion, so far as it can be fathomed, regards with the utmost suspicion even moderate calculations of the Russian numbers and of the troop-carrying capacity of the Trans-Siberian, and, starting with the assumption that the Russian army east of Lake Baikal was not more than 100,000 when war broke out, would credit Kharbin with the arrival of only 400 men a day. But, granted that the Japanese are the best judges of matters that concern their very existence, it must be declared that such estimate is dangerously optimistic, and that our allies will risk much if they refuse to assume that in seven weeks' time they must be prepared to deal with a Russian army of 140,000 men, as well as the garrison of Vladivostok. If contact with the Russian field army takes place earlier or later than the date named a corresponding decrease or increase in the numbers will naturally follow. The actual dates here given are only for purposes of calculation.

There are, of course, numerous other elements which enter into the problem. In every campaign, or at least in the greater number of modern instances, the first combats afford proof of some moral or material advantage on one side or the other which has not been reckoned with before contact. Until the result of the first battle on land has been decided it is not possible to say whether the military aptitudes of the Japanese, and the lessons taught them by their former instructors

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from France and Germany, give promise of such success on land as the navy has won at sea by close adherence to British methods. So far as the campaign has gone there has been nothing to show that the Japanese is inferior as a fighting man to the Russian; let us, for the moment, limit ourselves to that.

If the first actions on land display a marked superiority on one side or the other, then we may have to recast our ideas. Napoleon, in 1815, counted one Frenchman the equal of one Englishman, but also the equal of two Prussians, Belgians, Dutchmen, or Germans, and on this valuation based his plan. It is not a point upon which the modern German commentator upon the Waterloo campaign dilates at length, but such as it is, and for what it is worth, it stands on record. If we find that one Russian equals two Japanese, or *vice versa*, then naturally the question of what 140,000 Russians correspond to in terms of Japanese units must be faced, and the result be embodied in the remaining velocity of the Japanese missile at Kharbin, or wherever the Russians elect to stand at the date named.

The Japanese should beware of becoming intoxicated by their naval successes, and should view the military situation with the utmost calm. They should remember Napoleon's advice to the most famous army of modern times—"Il faut marcher avec prudence. Les Russes ne sont pas encore entamés, ils savent aussi attaquer"—and they should consider that message as a warning to themselves. A great military empire is on its mettle; the lives, the reputations, the fortunes of every Russian, from the highest to the humblest, are at stake. Incredible exertions will be made to retrieve the situation; the Russian is a stout fighter, he has great traditions, and is not disheartened by defeat. The Japanese appear to have the game in their hands if they keep their heads cool and their ambitions within bounds. An advance upon Kharbin is a serious military risk unless the Japanese can bring 250,000 combatants into line 400

miles from the sea within seven weeks, and an increasingly larger number at later dates ; a defeat here spells disaster.

But the Japanese have read their Mahan ; they must know the pregnant words with which he advises a maritime Power to "grasp firmly some vital chord of the enemy's communications and so force him to fight there," and they will surely perceive that if the fortune of war places Korea, the Liautung Peninsula, and Vladivostok in their hands, the vital chord of Russian East Asia is severed, and that Russia must fight on ground of Japanese choosing or not at all.

In a combat between the elephant and the shark, if the elephant enters the water and suffers for it, that is no reason why the shark should begin to flounder inland in pursuit. A prudent strategy would not launch the army of an island empire into the heart of a continent ; it would not play into the enemy's hands and abandon all the advantages of position.

It will be objected, the aim of Japan is to oust Russia from Manchuria and replace China, the lawful owner, in possession : how can this object be attained without ejecting Russia from Manchuria *manu militari* ? But the real question is, Will the presence of 200,000 victorious Japanese at Kharbin compel Russia to make peace and abandon the contest ? There is nothing whatever to show that it will, and there is every reason, on military grounds, to think that it will not. Kharbin, insignificant in itself, is the Moscow of East Asia, and all the lessons of Moscow apply. The greatest possible success at Kharbin, even entailing the annihilation of the Russian army, would settle nothing ; it would simply mean that so many hundred miles further west a larger army would be collected, and that a fresh advance would be made the next year, or the year after, when Russia was ready. There could be no hope, within any reasonable time, of establishing China in Manchuria in any posture to withstand the shock of a few Russian battalions ; therefore the alternative before Japan would

be the maintenance, for ten years, of a great army in Manchuria, or a retirement with infinite loss of prestige and nothing of permanent value gained by the incursion.

Japan can never hope to attain to that position of unquestioned military pre-eminence over Russia which England attained in the fourteenth century over France. So great was our superiority that, when the Duke of Lancaster set out to march through France from north to south in 1378, the most trusty councillors of Charles V.—namely, de Clisson, the Duke of Anjou, even the doughty Constable du Guesclin himself—advised that the enemy should not be fought, since “the English have been so fortunate that they think they cannot be defeated; and in battle they are the most confident people in the world, for the more blood they see, whether their own or the enemy’s, the more eager they are for the fray.” Yet what remains? Not one shred of French territory in our possession, for the simple reason that, given rival races of equal value and solidarity, with reasonably proportioned populations, the permanent domination of a continent by an island is against reason, against nature, and against sense.

If Port Arthur, Korea, and Vladivostok fall into Japanese hands, the dominion of Russia in East Asia is ended. Its *raison d'être* vanishes, since the outlet upon the sea is lost. Established at these three points, the Japanese can make themselves so strong that, so long as they retain command of the sea and hold their army in leash, they can consider their position inexpugnable. Port Arthur in Japanese hands is unassailable by land; Korea can be defended for the greater part by a chain of defensive works across the 100 miles of the narrowest part of the peninsula on the principle of Torres Vedras; even if Vladivostok cannot be held indefinitely against the might of Russia, which remains to be proved, it can be stalemated and rendered useless by the occupation of the islands commanding the entrance to the port.

Here, then, is the vital chord severed, and here must

Russia fight, 5,000 miles from her true base, and with every moral and material disadvantage, or not fight at all. It is 1812 reversed, and it is Russia that is cursed with all the manifold disadvantages of Napoleon's fatal ambition. The Japanese army remains intact, the nation unspent, and take what course Russia may, she remains exposed to an offensive return, along all the wide frontage of the sea, by the concentrated weight of her enemy's arms.

CHAPTER XI

THE CHINESE FACTOR

A REVIEW of the military situation in the Far East affords such a wide field for inquiry and criticism that one would willingly restrict oneself to the combatants and the events of the war drama as they occur, and not seek to enter upon the discussion of a great number of subsidiary questions which do not as yet come within the four corners of the operations in progress, and are somewhat *ultra crepidam* of a military critic. The case of China, momentarily in the background, may, however, at any moment come to the front, and no one who watches the trend of events in the Far East can view without misgiving the gradual and disquieting approach of a Chinese army towards the probable theatre of impending hostilities and the arrival of the Chinese Peiyang squadron at Chifu.

We may all be prepared to admit that, if the ambitions of Japan should unfortunately prompt her to overrun Manchuria and penetrate far into the continent of Asia, she is bound to organise China if she can, in order to seek peace and ensue it by having the weight of the Chinese masses at her back.

Nevertheless, on strictly military grounds Japan would be well advised to limit her ambitions, and not seek to penetrate into the recesses of Asia in chase of a receding will-o'-the-wisp which would inevitably land her into difficulties.

If the extreme importance of the Chinese factor be

admitted, does not this admission rather strengthen than weaken the case of those who recommend Japan to go warily and limit her ambitions ? The military advantage of the assistance of China is certainly considerable, more by reason of her resources than by that of her military strength, but the political dangers involved in her intervention may prove at once disastrous to neutrals and absolutely fatal to the legitimate aspirations of Japan.

Thanks to her courage, but still more thanks to her prudence and moderation, the cause of Japan is almost universally popular to-day in every nation that calls itself free. If Japan encouraged and abetted China to join in the war and raised the standard of Asia for the Asiatics, which is simply a notice to quit served upon every nation owning possessions east of Suez, she would infallibly lose the good opinion of the world, which may be, and often is, swayed by sentiment, but in the long run is directed by hard material interests and the instincts of self-preservation.

The interposition of China in the present war could hardly take place without grave danger to the persons, properties, and interests of all nations directly or indirectly concerned in the trade of the Far East, since the mass of the Chinese do not discriminate between one European and another. If the war were unsuccessful, failure might be visited upon unoffending nationalities for the sake of revenge ; if successful, pretensions might be put forward which would coerce Europe and America into compact opposition : in neither case would the cause of Japan profit, and no nation can afford to lose twice the fruits of victory. Japan is not now, nor can she ever hope to be, sufficiently strong to run counter to the interests of Europe and America. Fighting as she does to-day in a just cause and with the expressed intention of limiting her ambitions to legitimate aims, she attracts to herself the goodwill of the world. Joined with China, she mortgages her future to the good behaviour of a vain, pretentious, and undisciplined race, whose capacity for mischief is only limited by its military

impotence, absence of public spirit, and want of power to do harm.

When Mr. Hay's proposals fell like a bombshell in the diplomatic dovecote, there was a great fluttering among the doves. In view of the previous action of the United States, Russia was suspicious of the motive, while the friends of Japan only saw her deprived of an eventual and valuable coadjutor. There was hesitation and demur. History may say that the initiative of the United States was the most remarkable act of statesmanship of the opening years of the century, and let us hope it may add that it saved the world from one of the gravest dangers on the political horizon. Reflection will surely induce all men of sense to agree that not only was Mr. Hay in the right, but that, in the interests of the world's peace, neutrality should be imposed upon China, even though the *ultima ratio* has to be resorted to in the process. Neither of the combatants would have any reason to complain, since one would be saved from a danger that is obvious and imminent, and the other from an equal danger, though one superficially less obvious and more remote. China has, indeed, made a declaration of neutrality, which was published in the *Peking Gazette* on February 12 last; but it is distinctly stated in that document that the enforcement of the rules of neutrality will be impossible in Manchuria, and the reservation may serve to cover designs at present unavowed.

In the true interests of all the nations of the world, without exception, the intervention of China in the war must be prevented. Japan, it is almost certain, could have had China as an ally for the asking. Instead—and it is the best proof of her sense and perspicacity—she has counselled moderation, has welcomed Mr. Hay's note, and has done all in her power to restrict hostilities and to narrow the issue. It would be most improper and unfair not to allow Japan full credit for this far-seeing and statesman-like decision. But she can hardly be expected to interpose and fight China, if China plunges recklessly into the struggle on her side; that is too much

to ask of any nation at grips with a powerful enemy, and, if Chinese rifles go off by themselves when the struggle on land begins, European diplomacy, feeble, vain, and secretive, will alone be to blame, and must be held responsible for all the consequences.

By limiting her ambitions and the scope of her operations Japan secures a double benefit: first, the continued sympathy of the world, which is the best trump in her hand; secondly, security from exhaustion, which is the greatest danger any Power has to face that challenges Russia on land. The acceptance of Chinese aid must inevitably tend to deprive Japan of the world's sympathy, and the immediate military advantages to be gained by the alliance are insufficient to make amends for the loss. Successful war alone can save Japan from extinction as an independent Power, and permit her to return to the happier paths of peace and progress. How can this success be best secured?

There are some who, drawing their inspirations from the principles of what they call "absolute war," contend that the enemy's main army must be sought and defeated, and that a decisive defeat of the Russians at Kharbin will settle the campaign, and make it impracticable for Russia to renew the conflict with hope of success. It is the master error of Napoleon, who calculated in precisely similar fashion that after his Borodino and the occupation of Moscow—which was "absolute war" with a vengeance—Russia would make peace. Russia, however, did nothing of the kind, and in a moment all this great conception fell to the ground with a crash, burying the Grand Army in its ruins. It is certainly of the first importance for Japan to crush the enemy's field army should it offer the opportunity desired, and if those who would prompt Japan to penetrate into the heart of Asia are prepared to tell us that Russia has lost her tenacity and her courage, and will sign an ignominious peace after the loss of a single army and before her vitals are so much as touched, then no one could have any military objection to urge to a march on Kharbin with all its

consequences. But no one is justified in making such assumption, which is opposed to all the logic of facts and the lessons of history.

The real question is, What limits should Japan set to her military ambitions in order to enable her to outlast Russia in a long war of endurance? If we allow, for the sake of argument, that there are 50,000 Russians in the field army south of Mukden, and that in May there will be 150,000 Russians in the field at Kharbin, naturally the attack and defeat of the 150,000 would be dictated by the principles of "absolute war" and of common sense, if success had all the promise held out by some writers of talent. Wipe off the 150,000 Russians—they will take some wiping—and allow at Kharbin 200,000 or 250,000 victorious Japanese in their place, and how much nearer are we to the solution of the problem? We should simply see the beginning of the concentration of 500,000 Russians at Lake Baikal, and "absolute war" would require their defeat, as it would subsequently that of 1,000,000 Russians on the Ural Mountains, and of 3,000,000 at Moscow, and even then we are no further advanced than was Napoleon, who failed, though he crossed the Niemen with 363,000 of the finest troops in the world.

The principles of "absolute war" are very fine things in their way, but they are subservient to the real end of all warfare—namely, the achievement of national aims and the imposition of the national will upon the enemy. There is no apparent reason why this war should ever terminate except through the military, financial, and national exhaustion of one or other of the combatants; and, if this be so, then the principles which Japan must follow to succeed are those of concentration of strength and conservation of energy, making war too difficult and too onerous for Russia to continue with hope of final victory. It may be necessary, although there are other alternatives, for Japan to clear the air by the occupation of Mukden and the defeat of the Russian army there concentrated, since

this force is in fact, though not in name, the army of relief for Port Arthur, and the attack on this fortress, save by a *coup de main*, cannot be securely prosecuted so long as an army of relief remains within call. But Mukden should be the limit of Japan's military ambitions in a first campaign, and the rest of the short summer season will be fully occupied by the attack on Port Arthur and Vladivostok and the organisation of the territory in occupation, so that the next Russian advance may be brought up against impenetrable barriers.

It is the principles followed by her enemy in the Crimean War, rather than in 1812, that Russia has to dread. No one would venture to compare the soaring genius of the god of modern war with the wit of the groundlings who planned the attack on Sevastopol. No one would compare the brilliant host which crossed the Niemen with all the pomp and circumstance of war with that heterogeneous, ill-found expedition which landed in the Crimea, devoid of everything that makes an army formidable, save its splendid and oft-tried native courage. Yet this succeeded where the other failed; the Crimean War left Russia broken, exhausted, and constrained to sign a disastrous peace, while 1812 made her the first military Power in Europe, Napoleon a fugitive, and his army a wreck. It is not with impunity that one ranges the resistless forces of nature, distance, and climate in the ranks of one's foes. As allies these forces are invaluable; as enemies they are fatal. In the long history of war¹ few great distant expeditions have succeeded, and most have ended by the ruin of the army and the country embarking upon them. If this has been true of dynastic wars and professional armies, how much more true will it not be in future wars between nations in arms?

¹ "M." wrote to *The Times* from Oxford on March 28 to point out that this historical generalisation had been anticipated by Thucydides in the words placed by him in the mouth of the Syracusan orator Hermocrates, 415 B.C.: "Rarely have great expeditions, whether Hellenic or barbarian, when sent far from home, met with success." The coincidence, writes "M.," is a striking illustration of the truth that the principles of strategy are the same in all ages.

CHAPTER XII¹

AMPHIBIOUS POWER

WHEN an insular state launches forth its army against a continental Power after securing the command of the sea, it retains to the last the faculty of changing the point of attack. There is no such liberty upon a land frontier. The initial line of deployment of a European army is something not far removed from a fixed quantity. We know, or we can easily learn by investigation, where each army corps is located, what lines of railway lead towards the frontier, and what railway stations have been organised for detraining in the zone of concentration. Comparing all these *data* with the statistics of mobilisation, the situation of the enemy, and the traditions of national strategy on one side and the other, it becomes an easy matter for any skilled observer, thoroughly acquainted with the forces in presence, to map out the projected deployment with a reasonable degree of precision, and to say how many men will become available upon any given date subsequent to the issue of the order of mobilisation.

Once all the huge and interdependent machinery for the movement and supply of a couple of million men has been set in motion, there is no power remaining for a sudden change of plan, unless chaos and confusion are to supersede order and regularity. The only liberty remaining is that of detraining troops at a greater or less distance from the frontier, and even this liberty is

¹ *The Times*, March 29, 1904.

only retained by a Power which has made antecedent provision for such operation by the creation of a series of detraining stations, échelonné in rear of the frontier line, and provided with dépôts and magazines. Thus, when war breaks out in Europe, each nation knows in advance, with an accuracy that approaches the mathematical, where its enemy will be found, and, approximately, in what strength during each day that succeeds mobilisation. It is only when one side or the other advances, and the first collisions occur, that we enter once more into the normal atmosphere of war, that of the unknown and the unexpected.

Very different is the case of an island state which sends forth its armies by way of the sea. Everything that the army requires is contained within the broad flanks of the fleet of transports, everything is there that the continental army finds at its advanced bases ; and, at the will of the directing hand, the whole armada alters course and appears thousands of miles from where its presence has been anticipated, carrying alarm and confusion into the ranks of the enemy.

The threat of invasion by way of the sea is the most terrible weapon in the armoury of national strategy, if its use is properly understood and the weapon deftly wielded. Ten thousand men at sea may cause ten times their number to march and counter-march upon the continental territory of the enemy, and yet fail to meet an impending blow veiled behind the gloom of the illimitable and trackless wastes of the ocean and secure in the protection of a dominant navy. There is almost nothing it may not aspire to gain, since superior mobility, and the irresistible power accruing from the initiative and surprise, dictate the law to the adversary, and compel him to follow events with humility rather than control them. Multiply the armada until the armed strength carried across the sea equals or surpasses the force of the enemy, and there is almost nothing within reach of its long arm that this amphibious force cannot aspire to win.

The day following Admiral Virenius's departure from Suez with the Russian Mediterranean squadron for the Far East, Japan suddenly broke off relations, and prepared to act in defence of her threatened interests. Three weeks earlier Russia had been clearly warned in *The Times* that the limits of Japanese patience would be overstepped if this squadron was ordered eastward; for it was impossible, at the point that negotiations had reached, to expect Japan to allow a naval force to assemble which might conceivably be capable of wresting from her the command of the sea.

The war broke out two years too soon for the Russian cause, and two months too soon for Japan. The losses sustained during the winter campaign against China had caused the Japanese generals to become thoroughly conversant with the conditions of a campaign in East Asia, and they were not willing to expose their men to hardships which could be avoided. An army was sent out to Korea to seize the peninsula and surprise the intriguers at Seoul, and carried out its arduous task, despite the severity of the weather, with entire success. Korea was overawed, and the whole fabric of Russian intrigue in the peninsula fell to the ground like a house of cards. But the mass of the troops remained at home, prevented by the rigours of the climate from immediately following up the stunning blow delivered by the navy. The ensuing delay was favourable to the Russian cause. Recovering from the first surprise, the Russians had time to turn round; they repaired some of their ships, and placed their army in a position to resist. The Trans-Siberian Railway was worked at full pressure, and during the first few weeks stood the strain reasonably well; thoughts of flight changed into thoughts of resistance.

When the professional soldiers of Europe turned their attention to the Far Eastern theatre, they were not slow to recognise the importance of Niuchwang; one after another, like a pack of hounds on a hot scent, they took up the cry, until the arrival of the Japanese at Niuchwang is expected with almost as implicit

confidence as that of the Dover packet at Calais pier. The Russians became impressed with this remarkable unanimity, hurried down train after train to increase the numbers of the insignificant army which was assembled in the Liau Valley at the outbreak of the war. Although the precise figures are not known, it is probable that there will be not less than 60,000 to 70,000 men south of Mukden by March 25, while there are 25,000 at Port Arthur—that is to say, that the greater part of the available field army of Manchuria is now so placed that it can resist attack from the side of Niuchwang with a much better prospect of offering a stout resistance at this particular point.

Thus the situation has changed, and things that were easy and advisable yesterday may be neither one nor the other to-day. All the facts must be perfectly well known at Tokio, and the point of immediate interest is to discover what schemes these very intelligent islanders are hatching behind the veil of secrecy with which they have enshrouded themselves, and whether a changed situation may result in changed resolutions.

What the Japanese know is that the constant rapping at the door of Port Arthur and the assembly of a Japanese army in Northern Korea, combined with the almost unanimous belief of the pundits that Niuchwang is the objective, have caused the Russians to draw down the greater part of their field army into the Liau Valley, and to denude the rest of the theatre of operations. Meanwhile the mass of the Japanese army is intact and at liberty, while the choice of the point of attack remains entirely at their disposal. It is possible and even probable that this army will be thrown ashore on the Liautung Peninsula and to the north of the gulf. There is the advantage of concentration of effort, since a Japanese army is already firmly established in Northern Korea, and draws nearer daily to the Yalu, while the main battle fleet holds Port Arthur under the menace of its guns. It may also be fairly argued that if the

Russians have drawn down their chief strength towards the coast it is so much to the advantage of Japan, who can hope to prosecute the decisive operations of the war within easy distance of her true base, the sea, and at the greatest possible distance from the Russian base—namely, Moscow and the heart of the Russian Empire.

But there is no single means of advancing the national cause, and, in the realms of strategy, failure is only certain when decisions are based upon preconceived ideas rather than upon circumstances of the moment and the evidence of the senses.

A great English historian once wrote of Athanasius that he preserved a distinct and unbroken view of a scene that was constantly shifting, and was thus enabled to seize the fleeting moment which passes by before it is observed by the common herd. Athanasius, it is evident, possessed all the requirements of an eminent strategist. Upon a theatre of war circumstances change from day to day, and on the field of battle from hour to hour. However good it may be to persevere with a bad plan rather than change it in course of execution, it would be folly and only proof of obstinacy, to prosecute, *ab initio*, operations designed to meet one set of conditions when accumulating evidence shows that these former conditions no longer exist.

Whatever the decision may be—and the wise man will suspend his judgment until the Japanese have shown their hand in a decisive manner—there can be no question that the immediate interest of the moment for British onlookers is the recognition of the influence of the threat of invasion from over-sea upon the decisions of a continental enemy. Despite the fact that the main body of the Japanese army has remained at home, and that only the navy and a fraction of the army have been employed, the Russians have radically changed their initial dispositions, and have been compelled to place all their field army in movement—or, at least, all that remains of it after the deduction of 45,000 good troops for the garrison of the fortresses—groping

blindly in the dark and endeavouring to surprise the mysterious secret of the mocking sea, without, as yet, having any certain news of their enemy's plans.

Let us carry forward this fact to the balance credit of our next national war, and retain in our memories that the same menace, which served Frederick and wore down Napoleon, is ours to command now, as ever, the servant of our allies and the despair of our enemies, given that we continue to maintain a predominant navy and an army suited to the special needs of our geographically splendid isolation.

CHAPTER XIII¹

THE COSSACKS

It is a matter for regret that none of our active young leaders of mounted troops should have taken the trouble to study on the spot the most interesting race of horsemen in the world, the far-famed legendary Cossacks. Much can be learnt about them from books, but none of these, alas! are in the English language. The writings of Starikoff, Choroschkine, Petroff, and Krasnoff in Russian, those of von Pettau, von Stein, and von Krahmer in German, together with the histories of Lesur, Rambaud, and Niessel in French, supply all that can be desired as a foundation for research. But the Cossacks themselves are the real and living interest, and the Cossack spirit is not to be learnt from books. It can only be assimilated by close contact with the Cossacks themselves, and by travel throughout those scattered and yet contiguous territories which reach from the shores of the Black Sea to the far Pacific.

Cossack history and tradition, the military organisation of the *voiskos*, and the economical *status* of the *stanitsas* form an interesting study; while, for a soldier, the arms, horses, and tactics are no less worthy of attention.

During the present war we are likely to hear much of these interesting communities, since the Cossacks promise to supply Russia with an arm of the service which should prove superior to anything Japan can

¹ *The Times*, April 2, 1904.

place in the field against them if the best regiments are sent to the front. It is, therefore, of practical utility to inquire what Cossack resources can be drawn upon for the purposes of an Eastern campaign.

The word Cossack is derived from a Tartar word signifying bandit, and up to 1814 the Kazak lived up to his name. The first Cossacks took boat on the Dnieper, the Volga, and the Don, and settled on the banks of these great rivers, living by plunder and by the proceeds of their fishing, fighting generally on foot, but always remaining near their boats, which secured them a safe retreat in case of a reverse.

Closely bound up with every page of Russian history, the Cossacks sometimes sided with the Tsars, but as often against them. On the accession of Peter the Great they formed a half circle round the southern frontiers, which they protected from Tartar invasions, penetrating later into Siberia, where they became the Russian advanced guard against Kirghiz and Kalmucks. So long as these communities remained on the frontier and were inured to constant warfare they retained all their best qualities. The legends interwoven with the names of Mazeppa and Platoff belong to heroic periods of Cossack lore, and so, too, do the deeds of the Cossacks of the Ukraine and Zaporogia, whose names have since passed away though their fame is abiding. As the Cossacks became more settled in their territories to the north-east of the Black Sea, and the confines of Russia marched rapidly past them towards the east, they became more confounded with the general population and less apt for war.

The first principle of Cossack service has always been that, in return for a grant of land and freedom from taxation, every man should come out when called upon and bring his own horse, arms, and equipment. It is a system which might with advantage be applied upon some of the frontiers of Britain. In practice many changes have been made, and the root principle is not one that is any longer generally respected. Many

Cossacks are too poor to provide their own horses, and the cost of their equipment falls upon the *stanitsa*, which is put to heavy expense and is very hard hit by an order of mobilisation. War, for the Cossack, is no longer a business that pays.

In 1875 a radical change was made in the old-established methods of Cossack service; the regiments were brigaded with the regular cavalry, and their independence as a fighting branch was destroyed. It is doubtful whether the change was of advantage. The greatest successes of the Cossacks in war, striking records of which we find scattered throughout the writings of Napoleon's generals, were due to the preservation of their particular and very unconventional methods of combat, which were the absolute antithesis of the traditions of regular cavalry. The tendency of late years has been to merge the Cossacks with the rest of the population, and old Platoff would hardly recognise in the Cossack of to-day his unkempt warriors who wore down the chivalry of France.

The Cossack *voiskos* still possess enormous tracts of territory, two-thirds of which are held in trust for the general community on the principle of the *mir*, while the other third belongs to the Cossack nobility, or is in the hands of non-Cossack peasants. The Don, Kuban, Terek, Ural, and Orenburg territories, all lying north-east of the Black Sea, are fairly compact, but those of Siberia, Trans-Baikal, the Pri-Amur, and Ussuri occupy long bands of country corresponding with the lines or frontiers which have in times past been committed to Cossack guardianship.

These eastern *voiskos* have been constantly engaged with Asiatic enemies, and have had no experience of regular fighting; those furthest east have been reinforced by contingents from the Trans-Baikal territory, while the Ussuri Cossacks have been fortified by heavy drafts from the Don which have been brought round by sea in the Volunteer Fleet. The five *voiskos* which are most immediately concerned in the present war are those

of Siberia, Semiretchinsk, Trans-Baikal, Pri-Amur, and Ussuri. Their total population may be put down at about 750,000 souls besides non-Cossacks, the number of males of what is known as "Cossack condition" being some 180,000.

The war strength of these five communities at present is about 25,000 men and 20,000 horses, but in these numbers Ussuri and Pri-Amur do not bulk largely. The total number of Cossacks in the same five *voiskos*, presuming that the whole available 20 classes are called out, and the *opolitchenie* or landsturm embodied, is about 60,000 men, but not more than 5,000 of these belong to the Ussuri and Pri-Amur communities. Although these five eastern *voiskos* have 800,000 horses, not a third are fit for service, and only 46,000 are fit for the saddle, of which only 4,000 are to be found in Pri-Amur and Ussuri. This fact is important, since it results that nearly all the horses in the army mobilised against Japan must come from the west, save what can be collected from non-Cossack districts or from China.

These five *voiskos* do not represent the most important and efficient part of the Cossack forces, which are mainly in the Don and to the north of the Caucasus, with most of their active regiments spread out like a fan round Russia's south-western frontiers. Some of these, no doubt, can be sent east, and we have reports that regiments from the Caucasus and the Don have already marched; but it must be remembered that the Cossacks represent the chief element in the Russian cavalry of the present day. They are the mainstay of internal law and order, while on the great plains of the west cavalry is for Russia what ships are for England, and the frontiers cannot be largely denuded of these valuable troops. Moreover, even if a reinforcement is required in the east, the Cossack territories west of Orenburg are no more favourably placed to supply troops than any other military district. Even in the territories of the eastern *voiskos* it is a far cry from Lake Baikal to Port Arthur. One may put down the *maximum* number of Cossacks

available for service at 50,000 men between Lake Baikal and the Pacific. This figure is only given as an indication, for it is obvious that during a war in East Asia it is not a question of what number of men and horses Russia possesses, but of how many she can keep in the field.

Experts agree that the Japanese cavalry is the weakest branch of the army of our ally ; 20,000 horsemen from India and another 20,000 from our Colonies would be the best military aid we could render to Japan if the *casus fœderis* were to arise. If Japan uses her horsemen after the prehistoric methods in vogue at Potsdam and Nancy, the Cossacks will probably destroy them ; but if the lessons of the Civil War in America and of the Boer War are taken as a guide, then the Japanese may be able to give the famous Cossack *lava* a rough lesson. The Cossacks are not to be beaten by serried ranks and classic charges ; Napoleon tried that, and lost his cavalry without injuring his enemy. The tactics that will destroy Cossacks are the tactics of the Boers. To the heavy dragoon the Cossack appears a foe beneath contempt, with his high saddle, cramped seat, and sorry ill-kept nag. Yet he is a fine horseman after his fashion, and his pony will live where other horses starve. A stout heart, steady nerve, and the traditions of victory make him an enemy to be respected. Whether the Cossacks in the mass are above or below their reputation, time will show. It is certain that they have never yet been intelligently fought.

CHAPTER XIV¹

THE ENTANGLEMENT OF PORT ARTHUR

A VERY interesting and significant piece of news was sent to *The Times* a short time ago by one of its Russian correspondents. General Dragomiroff, it is said, was summoned to the councils at the Russian capital after the dramatic events of the first week of hostilities, and was consulted upon the situation in the Far East. He is reported to have advised the evacuation of Port Arthur, both by the navy and the army, in order that a greater disaster might be prevented; and, though there is no chance that the advice will be followed, the fact that it should have been tendered by a man of such first-rate ability as Dragomiroff is a very grave sign indeed. Although he has arrived at a time of life when he must be considered past active work in the field, Dragomiroff remains by far the most original thinker in the Russian army, and one could name no other soldier wearing the Tsar's uniform with such keen perceptions or such an inborn genius for penetrating into the heart of a military question by the most direct road.

It is not too much to say that the contributions of Dragomiroff to the military literature of the last quarter of a century are the most valuable and refreshing products of his country and his time in the study of the art of war. Anything that Dragomiroff thinks is

¹ *The Times*, April 7, 1904.

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worth hearing; everything he says is certain to be expressed in the very bluntest and most homely terms. He is always fresh, original, direct, and fearless, and, though he confessedly bases his ideas of war upon Suvarovian tactics and maxims, he is very far indeed from being a representative of the old school; and there is probably no other officer of the Tsar's army more widely read, more in touch with the latest theories, and more schooled in all the best traditions of the past masters of the art of war.

We can quite believe that the advice tendered by the General, accompanied as it apparently was by some acid criticism upon the policy pursued by the Tsar's Government in the Far East, has proved most unwelcome, and has, indeed, been "energetically repudiated." The question remains whether the advice offered was good or bad.

If Dragomiroff was called to council, it must be presumed that he was made acquainted with the circumstances, so far as they were known in the Russian capital; and it is the fact of his advice having been given *en connaissance de cause* that so greatly increases its importance and adds to its significance. He would have asked to be told the time for which Port Arthur was provisioned, the numbers of the Russian field army now available in the Far East, and the number of the reinforcements that could be brought up month by month. Without these facts in his possession he could have expressed no opinion at all. The advice he is said to have tendered is compatible with only one conclusion—namely, that, given the known strength of the Japanese army and the extreme limit of resistance of Port Arthur to capture, there is no reasonable chance of relieving the town by the action of the field army within the requisite limits of time.

It is no small thing that he asks, and part of it is almost beyond the power of Russia to accomplish. The evacuation of Port Arthur by the army is still possible, though at any moment it may become impossible; it

entails the destruction of a vast quantity of stores, and probably of many heavy guns and much ammunition ; still, as a military act, the evacuation is feasible. But the navy cannot evacuate the position, not, at least, without a successful action with a superior force, or by means of a nocturnal flitting, which would have little more than one chance in five of success. What Dragomiroff demands, therefore, is the immolation of the Pacific squadron, whether at its moorings or in battle, in order that it may no longer impose upon Russia subsequent loss of the garrison which remains to guard it.

There are probably few soldiers who have not asked themselves what they would do in General Kuropatkin's place, if confronted with the serious alternatives that present themselves. Provided Port Arthur is not provisioned and defended on a scale and in a manner to enable it to stand a siege until such moment as the relieving army can make sure of victory, then the advice of Dragomiroff, appalling as it must be for Russian prestige, is in truth the lesser of two evils.

If the naval squadron cannot escape, and must eventually become a wreck or a prize of Japanese victory, what is gained by leaving 35,000¹ men, with

¹ The exact strength of the garrison of Port Arthur was not definitely known to the public before the close of the siege. The garrison consisted of the 4th and 7th Divisions of East Siberian Rifles, respectively commanded by Major-Generals Fock and Kondratenko, besides the 5th regiment of the 2nd Division, or 27 battalions with 22,000 rifles. There were also two reserve battalions, a regiment of fortress artillery, the 2nd sapper battalion, the Kwantung sapper company, two brigades of field artillery, one sortie battery, one 57 mm. battery, and several units of frontier guards, or 35,000 men, added to some 10,000 men of the Pacific Squadron, or 45,000 in all. After the naval action of August 10 the naval contingent was reduced to some 5,000 men, most of whom were eventually employed ashore. The artillery of the fortress included 70 field guns, and 200 guns of 25 and 10 centimetres, with 300 and 500 projectiles per gun respectively, exclusive of the supply brought in by Colonel Spiridonoff in two trains just before the investment was completed. The 546 guns which fell into the hands of the Japanese at the surrender doubtless included ordnance removed from vessels of the squadron. Major-General Smirnoff was the commandant of the fortress, and General Nikitine commanded the artillery. Lieutenant-General Stössel was commander of the troops in the Kwantung promontory, but became virtually governor of the fortress when the siege began.

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some 500 guns, to share in the disaster and increase the laurels of Japan ?

There is, of course, a good deal to be said on the other side. The moral effect of the retreat of the garrison without firing a shot, and the destruction of ships, stores, and batteries, would find an echo which would reverberate throughout Asia and have incalculable consequences. By standing fast the garrison would hope to occupy and tie up a large part of the enemy's armies, and so increase the chances for the army of succour. It is also true that during the weeks that have elapsed since the advice was given the military position of Russia has somewhat improved. Port Arthur may have been better provisioned, and a respectable Russian army has been concentrated in the Liau Valley. But, unless General Kuropatkin is able to withstand the coming onslaught of the enemy, the strategical problem remains unchanged, and the solution is only deferred. At any moment the crisis may become acute.

If it be known at the Russian capital that Port Arthur must fall before it can be relieved—and General Dragomiroff's advice is not susceptible of any other explanation—then, *quâ* moral result, the disaster is far greater to see all these men, ships, stores, and guns become the prize of the enemy than to see them removed or destroyed as part of a deliberate scheme of national strategy, leaving no hostages to the enemy save the ruins of a fortress and the wreck of a fleet.

Nor does the topography of the fortress offer any hope of containing an army of larger numbers than the garrison if the Japanese restrict themselves to a simple investment. On the contrary, only a small section of ground has to be covered by the enemy's line of investment, and it is probable that the Russian garrison, at a pinch, could be held fast by far smaller numbers than it can muster within the fortress. Dragomiroff's advice is thus absolutely sound, subject to the premisses which have been named.

But that a proud military empire could consent to such a sacrifice was not to be expected for a moment. For Napoleonic strokes and Napoleonic decisions the first requirement is Napoleon. Frederick, at Prague, could not decide to abandon the siege and fall on Daun with all his forces; Napoleon, at Mantua, left all his siege works and batteries a prize to the enemy, certain that, if he beat the relieving army in the field, Mantua and all it possessed would return to him in natural course.

There are also those always imponderable chances of war. Few men in the Russian army believe that the Japanese are capable of standing up to the Tsar's troops on a fair field with no favour: distance, climate, defects of organisation, surprises by land and sea, or the "mud of Poland," may all tell against the enemy, and meanwhile, say the Russians, if the Japanese want Port Arthur, let them come and take it: why should we obligingly present them with a port on the Liautung Peninsula? There was, in short, never any chance that this counsel of strategic perfection could secure acceptance. Nevertheless, if the Japanese are capable of waging successful war on a large scale on land, as their friends and admirers believe, and of ousting the Russians from their strong positions in the Liau Valley, the memory of what might have been will recur, and Dragomiroff's advice will be remembered.

If General Kuropatkin is unable to resist the enemy and retreats to the north, it is certain that Port Arthur will prove an entanglement far worse than Ladysmith. We can only repeat that the adoption of the spirit of 1812 in the future conduct of the war against Japan is incompatible with the retention of Port Arthur as a fixed point, round which all the subsequent operations of the Russian field army must fatally revolve till the fortress falls.

CHAPTER XV¹

THE SITUATION IN APRIL

So long as a Russian ship in the Far East remains afloat, so long is the seal of final success wanting; and the hazards of modern maritime warfare are so many that this is not the moment to neglect or despise the menace, diminished though it be, remaining from the uninjured fragments of the Russian squadron.

However much the Russians may have recently lost sight of the first great objective of Japanese strategy, it is quite certain that all eyes in Japan have been fixed upon the Port Arthur squadron, since it must have been perfectly apparent to all and sundry in Japan that the annihilation of this squadron was a necessary preliminary to securing unfettered liberty of movement upon the mainland. Temporarily relieved of anxiety on this point, the Japanese can now turn their attention to the second objective, the defeat of the Russian army of operations.

The prosecution of this enterprise has undoubtedly been advanced a long stage by the events of the fatal 13th of April. On that morning news was received at Port Arthur of the approach of the Japanese fleet, and the Russian squadron, under Admiral Makaroff, put to sea to give battle. The Japanese appearing in overwhelming force, the Russians withdrew towards their batteries, and during the progress of this movement the *Petropavlovsk*, according to the Russian account, struck

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of April 4, 9, 14, 16, 19, 26 and 28, 1904.

upon a mine and capsized, carrying down with her the gallant admiral and some 600 sailors. The Russian accounts do not appear to attribute the disaster to the action of the enemy, but rather to some fatal mischance resembling that which caused the loss of the *Yenisci* in Dalny Bay.

Admiral Alexeieff's telegram¹ to the Tsar reporting this misfortune was as follows:

"I respectfully report to your Majesty that on the 11th the whole of the effective squadron sailed out six miles to the southward to manœuvre, and towards evening returned to the port. On the 12th a flotilla of eight destroyers went out to inspect the islands, having received orders to attack the enemy if they should be encountered.

"In the course of the night, owing to the darkness and heavy rain, three destroyers became separated from the flotilla. Two of them returned to Port Arthur at dawn. The third, however, which was the *Strashni*, having, according to the evidence of the seamen, encountered several Japanese destroyers, took them in the darkness for the Russian ships, and, giving a signal of recognition, joined them. At dawn, however, she was recognised by the enemy, and there was a fight at close quarters, in which the commanding officer, a midshipman, an engineer, and most of the crew were killed. One lieutenant, although wounded, continued firing on the enemy.

"At dawn on the 12th the cruiser *Bayan* went out, preceded by destroyers, and hurried to the rescue. About sixteen miles from Port Arthur the *Bayan* saw the destroyer *Strashni* engaged with four Japanese destroyers. Shortly afterwards an explosion occurred, and the *Strashni* sank.

"Driving off the enemy's destroyers by her fire, the cruiser *Bayan* approached the scene of the fight, lowered her boats, and had time to save a remnant of the crew.

¹ The text of this telegram is taken from Reuter's telegram from St. Petersburg of April 22.

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Unfortunately, there were only five men swimming on the surface, whose lives were saved. The cruiser was obliged to fight on her starboard side with six Japanese cruisers who came up. Having picked up her boats, the *Bayan* regained the harbour without damage or loss, although covered with fragments of shells.

"The *Diana* and five destroyers hastened to her succour, and at the same time the other cruisers, the battleships *Petropavlovsk* and *Poltava*, and some destroyers, came out of the roadstead, and the other battleships came out of the harbour in column formation, with the *Bayan* at the head and the destroyers on the flank. The Admiral proceeded to the scene of the fight with the *Strashni*, whither more Japanese destroyers and cruisers were approaching. After a short fusillade at fifty cables' length the enemy's ships drew off.

"At 8.40 a.m. a squadron of nine Japanese battleships appeared, and our ships accordingly retired towards Port Arthur. At the roadstead they were rejoined by the *Pobieda*, the *Peresviet*, and the *Sevastopol* coming out of the channel. The squadron was drawn up in the following order: *Askold*, *Bayan*, *Diana*, *Petropavlovsk*, *Peresviet*, *Pobieda*, *Novik*, five destroyers, and two torpedo-cruisers. They turned to the left, but when they were approaching the mouth of the channel the destroyers were signalled to return to the harbour and the cruisers to proceed. Manœuvring with the *Petropavlovsk* at their head, the squadron turned to the east, making for the enemy on their right.

"At 9.43 an explosion occurred on the right side of the *Petropavlovsk*, and then a second and more violent one under the bridge. A thick column of greenish-yellow smoke was seen to rise from the battleship, a mast, funnel, bridge, and turret were thrown up, and the battleship heeled over on her starboard side. The poop rose up, showing the screw working in the air. The *Petropavlovsk* was surrounded with flames, and in two minutes sank bow downwards. Some of the crew escaped.

"The torpedo gun-vessel *Gaidamak*, which was a cable's length from the *Petropavlovsk*, succeeded directly, and by means of her boats, in rescuing the Grand Duke Cyril, two officers, and forty-seven seamen. The destroyers and boats from the *Poltava* and *Askold* also picked up some men. In all seven officers and seventy-three seamen were saved.

"The battleship *Poltava*, which was following at two cables' distance, stopped her engines and remained on the scene of the disaster. At a signal from Admiral Prince Ukhtomsky, the other warships made for the entrance of the harbour, manœuvring towards the *Peresviet* in line. A mine exploded on the starboard side of the battleship *Pobieda*, and she listed, but continued on her way and entered the harbour with all the other ships behind her. The enemy remained in sight until three o'clock, and then disappeared.

"On the night preceding the sortie of the squadron lights and the outlines of ships were seen in the distance from the roadstead. The commander of the fleet kept watch in person until dawn from the cruiser *Diana*, stationed in the outer roadstead. He left her at four in the morning.

"In concluding, I take the liberty to announce respectfully that, in spite of the ill-success which has attended the Pacific fleet, the crews retain their *morale* and are ready to perform all the duties required of them. The gracious words which your Majesty addressed to the seamen at the painful hour of trial serve as consolation and support to the whole of the forces in their efforts to overcome the enemy, to the glory of their beloved Sovereign and of their country."

Admiral Togo's report upon these incidents was as follows:

"On the 11th our combined fleet commenced, as previously planned, the eighth attack upon Port Arthur. The fourth and the fifth destroyer flotillas, the fourteenth torpedo flotilla, and the *Koryo Maru* reached the mouth

of Port Arthur at midnight of the 12th, and effected the laying of mines at several points outside the port, defying the enemy's searchlight.

"The second destroyer flotilla discovered, at dawn of the 13th, one Russian destroyer trying to enter the harbour, and after ten minutes' attack sank her.

"Another Russian destroyer was discovered coming from the direction of Liautieshan. We attacked her, but she managed to flee into the harbour.

"There were no casualties on our side except two seamen on the *Ikazuchi* slightly wounded. There was no time to rescue the enemy's drowning crew, as the *Bayan* approached.

"The third fleet reached outside of Port Arthur at 8 a.m., when the *Bayan* came out and opened fire. Immediately the *Novik*, *Askold*, *Diana*, *Petropavlovsk*, *Pobieda*, and *Poltava* came out and made offensive attack upon us.

"Our third fleet, tardily answering and gradually retiring, enticed the enemy fifteen miles south-east of the port, when our first fleet, being informed through wireless telegraphy from the third fleet, suddenly appeared before the enemy and attacked them.

"While the enemy was trying to regain the port a battleship of the *Petropavlovsk* type struck mines laid by us on the previous evening, and sank at 10.32 a.m.

"Another ship was observed to have lost freedom of movement, but the confusion of enemy's ships prevented us from identifying her. They finally managed to regain the port.

"Our third fleet suffered no damage.

"The enemy's damage was, besides the above-mentioned, probably slight also.

"Our first fleet did not reach firing distance. Our fleets retired at 1 p.m. prepared for another attack.

"On the 14th our fleet resailed towards Port Arthur. The second, the fourth, and the fifth destroyer flotillas and the ninth torpedo flotilla joined at 3 a.m. and the third fleet at 7 a.m. No enemy's ship was seen outside the port.

"Our first fleet arrived there at 9 a.m., and, discovering three mines laid by the enemy, destroyed them all.

"The *Kasuga* and the *Nisshin* were despatched to the west of Liautieshan. They made an indirect bombardment for two hours, this being their first action. The new forts at Liautieshan were finally silenced.

"Our forces retired at 1.30 p.m."

It is impossible to feel anything but the deepest sympathy for a navy which has once more become the victim of circumstances, and the feeling of regret for the grievous loss of life which has accompanied this misfortune will be universal. Admiral Makaroff only reached Port Arthur little more than a month ago, with the mission of restoring confidence in the Pacific squadron after its earlier disaster. Had not this disastrous incident occurred, he might yet have found occasion to give proof of his acknowledged talent and restore victory once more to the Russian arms. His untimely death at the hour when Russia most has need of her greatest seamen is an almost irreparable loss to his sovereign and his country.

The first-class battleship *Petropavlovsk* was launched in St. Petersburg in 1894. Her displacement was 10,950 tons, with an indicated horse-power of 11,200, and a measured-mile speed of 16·8 knots. Her engines were by Hawthorn & Leslie. She was heavily armed and armoured, carrying four 12-in., twelve 6-in., and thirty-eight smaller quick-firing guns, with a weight of broadside fire of 3,387 lb., while her armour ranged from 10 in. on the turrets of the 12-in. guns to 4 in. on the lower deck redoubt. Her sea-going complement was 632 men. The *Poltava* and *Sevastopol* are sister ships, and the type is a modified *Royal Sovereign*.

Everything that has occurred during the maritime phase of the war lends weight to the maxim of Richelieu that misfortune and imprudence are two different words for the same thing. When the Russians should be

active, enterprising, and alert they are generally dormant; when caution is plainly required they rush to their doom. If we must plainly and clearly set down the naval humiliation of Russia to the original sin of shortsighted diplomacy, it is also necessary to add that little has been displayed on the professional side save the virtues of courage and patriotism.

As to the main and underlying cause of the maritime *débâcle*, it remains invariably and profoundly true that good policy makes good war. The first fruits of governmental incapacity in peace are military disasters in war, and by a tragic injustice the punishment falls on heads other than those responsible for the crime. Long before hostilities began the dangerous situation of the Pacific squadron was described in *The Times* in the plainest terms, yet all the acknowledgment received from the Russian capital was an intimation from the *Novoe Vremya* that "people are endeavouring to intimidate us with phantoms." The phantoms, alas! are there in truth, but they are the shades of brave Russian seamen who have fallen victims to the ineptitude which has marked the conduct of the war in its wider bearings. It is the business of diplomacy to understand, prepare, and simplify the rôle of the fighting services; the first combats are the test, not of arms, but rather of government itself and of its leading members. But it is also true that in the present instance the naval situation has been gravely aggravated by professional incompetence. The commanders of the *Bayan* and the *Novik* have invariably done well, while the lieutenant in charge of the *Silni* deserved well of his country. Elsewhere we may seek in vain for any display of qualities entitling Russia to rank among the serious naval Powers of the world.

The conduct of the *Variag* was magnificent, but it certainly was not war. She had great speed and twelve hours of darkness in front of her after the situation off Chemulpo was known to her commander. Instead of taking the crews of the *Koriets* and *Sungari* on board,

scuttling these vessels, and making a dash for freedom, she awaited the light, and, with her little consort in her wake, steamed out to absolutely certain destruction. The failure of Russian ordnance, whether mounted on board ship or on land, has also been a revelation. Despite frequent trials of strength, no serious damage has been done to a single ship of the enemy, and the in-shore squadron of the Japanese battle fleet takes liberties within the close range of Russian batteries in a manner which discloses a surprising contempt for the land batteries and submarine mines, apparently justified by past immunity from damage. The proceedings of Commander Oda on the night of the 12th give us the measure of the Russian destroyer flotilla and picketboats. Of all the feats of arms which have distinguished the Japanese navy in this war, nothing finer has been displayed than the conduct of this officer and his crew of the mining vessel *Koryo Maru*. The duty of laying a network of electro-mechanical mines within a mile of the entrance to the harbour was excessively hazardous, since it required that an unarmoured vessel, filled with explosives, should work deliberately under the beams of the Russian searchlights, within close range of the shore batteries, and exposed to the attacks of the Russian destroyers and torpedo boats. The chances were against success, yet success was achieved. Once more the Japanese ranged throughout the anchorage at their pleasure, once more the Japanese destroyers made a happy diversion without a single Russian mine or shell doing damage, and, covered by these craft, the *Koryo Maru* carried out its duty with a thoroughness and a skill deserving of generous recognition by all who admire devotion to duty in the domain of war. Unless more of the lighter craft have been injured than we know, there should be eighteen destroyers and torpedo boats at Port Arthur, yet, not a single one of these ventured to interfere with operations requiring time and taking place within a mile of the harbour. It was

a splendid opportunity, and it was missed, with results to Russia now known to all.

By no means the least interesting phrase in Admiral Togo's report of the naval operations between April 11 and 14 is that in which he attributes his success to the glorious virtue of the Emperor of Japan. There is an old-world flavour about this unusual expression which carries us back to the age of the Antonines. Military merit, we are told by Tacitus, was in the strictest sense an *imperatoria virtus*, and it is strange to see the ancient traditions revived in the prosaic century in which we live. Rome, however, went a good deal further in pursuit of this ideal than would be at all desirable in present circumstances, for Germanicus and Agricola were recalled in the flood-tide of their too popular victories, while Corbulo, for a similar fault, was put to death. Let us hope that the Japanese will not carry the Roman analogy too far.

The great successes which have attended the conduct of the naval war by Japan must not be allowed to blind us to the fact that these successes have been won, in a large measure, owing to the incompetence of the Russian navy. Nor, again, must we refuse to acknowledge that the concentration of Russian naval resources in a single, narrow, and ill-found maritime fortress has enormously simplified the task of the Japanese. If we ever are called upon to wage a maritime war in European waters the problem will be far more complex, since the shores of our possible enemies are studded with arsenals, defended ports, and torpedo-boat refuges, and a squadron acting against any one of these is liable to attack by surprise from any other unguarded point of the coast. The lessons of this war are being absorbed, point by point, by all nations alike, and the faults made are exactly those least likely to be repeated.

Up to the present moment of the war, and so far as the conditions permit of comparison, the action of Japanese strategy has closely followed the probable practice of a British navy in a wider field of operations.

But we are now reaching the point where the practice of the allied nations diverges, since the Japanese army is about to enter the lists to complete the work so well begun at sea. Upon a European theatre we have no such power, and few perhaps have realised all the consequences. The Japanese navy has not the position of predominance in strategic problems that our navy has assumed at home. There are no great traditions of naval policy and practice handed down like heirlooms from father to son to guide opinion, or, may be, to misdirect it. Naval opinion, in the war councils of Japan, has not the same overmastering and omnipotent influence which it has in those of Britain. The conditions are not the same, for, apart from traditions, Japan has no colonies and dependencies scattered broadcast about the habitable globe, and all her armed forces are concentrated and contained on the national territory. The war councils of Japan are essentially military, using the term in its vulgar sense, and in case of difference of opinion the voice of Marshal Oyama, as the senior executive officer, would prevail. A whole world of difference separates this conception of national strategy from ours.

"The army and the navy are distinguished nominally, but, in truth, they are as the two wheels of a cart." So declared a leading Japanese paper a few weeks ago, adopting a favourite and oft-repeated simile of the Chinese classics; and that, no doubt, is the ideal, as it ought to be with us. But Japanese naval officers, expert, dashing, and intelligent though they be, have not the same influence in national councils as the officers of the sister service. A divisional general of 1894 is now Prime Minister, and another member of the government has recently left office to assume the position of chief of the general staff of the army now assembling for attack. These things differentiate the army from the navy in Japan, and also, even in a greater degree, differentiate between the conditions prevailing in England and in Japan. It would require

a drastic surgical operation for any one in this country to picture any living British general Prime Minister of England, or any occupant of the front bench leading an army into battle. It would be difficult to say which alternative would offer least allurements or promise more appalling catastrophes.

Owing to the relative situation of the two services in Japan the command of the sea is regarded only as a means to an end, and not the end itself; the action of the navy is introductory and preparatory, and the decision is left to the land forces. When the Japanese advance begins upon the mainland we shall regretfully drop the particular thread of interest attaching to this campaign in its maritime aspects. We shall look on with envy at an island Power capable of waging decisive war, but at heart many of us will be thinking *sic vos non nobis*. We cannot hope, in our next naval war, to attack the maritime arsenals of our enemy in Europe from the land side, and we have made no adequate preparations to execute decisive attacks from the side of the sea. Presuming our enemy adopts Fabian tactics, we cannot therefore expect to deal a stunning blow at the harbours of refuge where his naval power is collected, that is to say, at his ships themselves; and unless we face this problem squarely, a long and desultory naval war is inevitable. We have, it is true, waged long and desultory wars in the past with some success, but it is open to question whether the modern machinery of fleets and the condition of the affairs of the world permit us to dawdle through a war again.

The Japanese hold in reserve their strongest trump, which has not yet been played—a numerous, highly-trained, and mobile army. We have no such force in reserve, and nothing that we can reasonably do will enable us to execute more than raids upon the Continental territory of a European foe. We must therefore either be prepared to conduct the naval attack upon the maritime refuge of our enemy's fleet with the

utmost vigour, with new means, new inventions, and new arms, and carry through such attack to a point far beyond the stage which the Japanese have reached at Port Arthur, or face the alternative of a long, harassing, and costly war, which will require a great numerical superiority to wage with even partial success. The attack upon a naval arsenal where a hostile fleet has taken refuge is a problem which can only be neglected at the cost of leaving us committed to the excessive hazards of long and indecisive war.

Some impatient and impressionable critics continue to find fault with the delay which has taken place in Japanese operations, and expect to see the Russian Colossus devoured at a mouthful. But no one has yet conquered space by a *coup de main*, and armies of the modern pattern are not moved about during mid-winter in East Asia with the facility with which we pull out the flag that marks the Japanese position at Pingyang and advance it to Wiju. M. Thiers, who had better opportunities than any one else in his day of studying the inner history of Napoleon's Russian campaign, gave it as his opinion to the late Mr. Nassau Senior that the fault of the Emperor lay in the intemperate haste of his movements and in his endeavour to finish the campaign at a single blow. The view of M. Thiers was that Napoleon should have advanced to the Vistula in one campaign and to the Niemen in the next, thus gradually, as he described it, "eating into the monster"; and if we may be chary of pitting the strategic theories of M. Thiers against the practice of Napoleon, we may probably believe that the views of the French statesman represented the judgment of impartial military critics of his day.

It is true that two months have elapsed since the rupture of negotiations, and no pitched battle has been fought. If Russia wills it, the same thing may be true of the next two months. War is a game in which there are two players, of whom one may rise and leave the table whenever the fancy takes him to forfeit a stake.

It has been already pointed out that the despatch of the Russian Mediterranean squadron to the East precipitated hostilities, and that if the Japanese had been the arbiters of historic evolution the outbreak of war would have been postponed for a month at least. Moreover, the best opinion in Japan believed that the preliminary operations at sea would last a month, and that only then, and at a very heavy price, would the sea be cleared. But the decision, so far as we are yet entitled to call it by the name, was reached in a single hour of a single night ; and the Japanese did not care sufficiently for the spectacular effect of the drama to fill up the gap by ranging the coasts with ships and men, and executing feints, as they might have done, from one end of the Russian Pacific shores to the other. The Japanese may have been lacking in foresight, but if any seaman had ventured to prophesy the events of February 8 and 9 before the war he would have been accounted a very sanguine individual. So long, again, as the ice held the coast in its iron grip military operations on a large scale were impracticable on the mainland, unless Japan was prepared to see her armies wither away before contact with the enemy. There is a limit to all human endurance, and the rigours of an East Asian winter are not favourable for bivouacs *à la belle étoile*.

Everything that circumstances warranted was done. The force sent to Korea was restricted to the *minimum* necessary to secure a grip on the peninsula and the capital, and the troops sent north were as many as could be protected from the inclemency of the season in the Korean towns and villages throughout the area in occupation. They were enough to deny the Russians the luxury of a Cossack raid far into Northern Korea ; and the steady pursuance of the Japanese plans has now brought the Mikado's forces, in the second week of April, to the precise point which they occupied late in August, 1894, when Yamagata arrived on the Yalu. There is only this material difference, that whereas in

1894 the subsequent operations had to be carried on in the early part of the winter, causing ravages in the Japanese ranks which have perhaps never been entirely admitted, there is now the whole of the short summer campaigning season in front of them, and they have all these months in which to crush the opposition of the Russian army. Those who declare that the Japanese have done nothing on the mainland forget that the Korean Peninsula measures 400 miles from Wiju to Fusan, and that the military occupation of this considerable territory and the establishment of order under the new conditions are not affairs of a passing hour.

The Japanese have their First Army now concentrated on the Yalu, where the Russians appear to intend to maintain their position. A number of minor skirmishes have occurred on the river line, and it will have been noticed that the Russian dead in one of these actions were found to belong to the 12th East Siberian Rifle Regiment. The natural deduction is that there is more than a Cossack rearguard in position, and that the Russians have the intention of holding the river line. In its lower reaches the Yalu is navigable up to Chauson, fifty miles from the sea, where the first rapids occur. The river estuary is a formidable obstacle, but as a defensive line against an enemy having command of the sea the Yalu's attractions are the reverse of obvious. The line can be turned from seawards or by a passage of the higher reaches of the river, while Liauyang, where the mass of the Russian field army is supposed to be concentrated, is 120 miles distant over indifferent roads. The Russians on the Yalu are thus much exposed, and if they elect to stand here they deserve to suffer for it.

In any case, we shall soon have an opportunity of seeing whether the Russian army has improved as much as its admirers believe. It will have to show a great advance upon the practice of the last war with Turkey in order to secure victory over Japan. In 1877 and 1878 the Russians made mistake after mistake, and had

not the armies of Turkey been directed with the utmost incapacity the Russians would certainly have been compelled to recross the Danube. Good fighters as the Japanese undoubtedly are, the strength of their army resides mainly in the staff and higher command, and faults made against a brave army well commanded are not indulged in with impunity.

Hitherto the Russian press has provided excessively tedious reading. If military genius is the power of seeing men, things, and circumstances as they are, then the Russian press has not been overburdened with it, since it has only given evidence of seeing things as they are not. In Bishop Butler's phrase, the Russians have only wanted to know what was said, not what was true.

Sometimes a reader will wonder whether the quaint conceits he sees in the Russian press are anything more than a postscript to Tolstoi's *War and Peace*, and whether Kuropatkin and Kharbin would not be better replaced by Kutusoff and the Kremlin. Russian pictures of war, whether on canvas or on paper, are always incomparably good in a descriptive sense, but they are always pictures, and as theories of war they are generally as mystic and untenable as those of the greatest Russian novelist's greatest epic.

War sometimes forgives criminals, but it never forgives dreamers. The sterile emotions of leaders of Russian thought are exceedingly beautiful, but as serious contributions to the decision of practical questions of national strategy they are remarkably useless. The Russians invent men after their own mournful ideals, and then weave round them a chain of circumstances and events to square with their own theories of life and contemporary history. All these visions vanish into the air at the touch of the enemy's sword and on contact with the stern realities of war; the Russian dreamer awakes to find himself in an unknown world.

It is somewhat invidious to recall that the disasters which have befallen the Russian navy were foretold in *The Times* before the outbreak of hostilities. It was

stated that Port Arthur contained, for the Russian fleet, what Metz contained for the army of Bazaine, the fatal germs of strategic death. The germs have fructified, and have stricken with their insidious disease the whole body of the Pacific squadron. No other result could reasonably have been anticipated, since none other was prepared. Fortresses or harbours of refuge exercise a fatal attraction upon wavering minds, and over the portals of every fortress should be inscribed as a warning to fleets and armies those terrible words which Dante, the first of reporters, discovered over the gates of hell. War is an affair of movement, activity, and combat; the harbour or fortress of refuge is the negation of all three, but its siren voice is always there to attract the wanderer into its haven of delusive peace. Ulysses, the first of admirals, was similarly beguiled, and escaped the temptation by timely recognition of his own weakness. Legend has woven another explanation into his proceedings, but it is clear in any case that Ulysses kept the sea, and it had been better for the Russians if they had followed his practice, even though they had chained their admiral to his conning-tower.

But the Russian dreamers have awakened to the stern realities of the contest before them, and for the first time since the opening of the war are beginning to show signs of returning animation. No one aware of the patriotism and constancy of the Russian nation has ever permitted himself to entertain any illusions respecting the gravity of the contest on land should the Russians awake to the dangers of their position and proceed to take the necessary steps to turn the situation to their advantage. There are as good brains in Russia as anywhere else, but in ordinary times they are atrophied by an extremely imperfect, not to say fantastic, system of government. With returning reason Russia is beginning to measure the greatness of the task in front of her, and to take some, at least, of the measures which are indispensable before any ideas of victory can be entertained.

The recognition of the vital importance of the Trans-Siberian Railway to the successful conduct of the war in Manchuria has been the first step, and, though existing defects cannot be made good in a day, some remedies are being applied. In Prince Khilkoff the Tsar has found one man at least equal to the situation and capable of endeavouring to dominate it. The completion of the circum-Baikal railway, promised for the middle of August, will be a fact of the utmost consequence, and this operation will be rendered even more salutary by the recent increase of rolling stock upon the lines east of Baikal and the pending provision of new sidings on the Manchurian system. The present limitation of military traffic is solely caused by the material impossibility of forwarding large numbers of men and large quantities of supplies and stores over a single line provided with insufficient rolling stock and inadequate sidings. In its issue of April 13 the *Viedomosti* shows that the ideal of the Russian Staff is to continue the improvement of the line until twenty-four military trains can be despatched daily, and when the circum-Baikal line is laid and large additions have been made both to the rolling stock and the sidings in East Asia there is no reason why, in course of time, a very great improvement should not take place. Japan will therefore doubtless be prepared for the result of this steady improvement in her enemy's line of communications, and will calculate that from August onward Russia may be able not only to place in the field, but also to supply, much more considerable numbers than she can now.

But nearly four months intervene between the present date and the promised completion of the circum-Baikal line; temporarily the traffic at Baikal is suspended, and it is to Japan's interest to complete her campaign with the utmost vigour while time and circumstances are still in her favour. Things which may be accomplished by 1,000 men this year may prove difficult for 2,000 the year following.

The military awakening of Russia must have been anticipated by all who have seen or read or studied Russians and Russian history, and may have made them converts to the views we have expressed that Japan should limit her military ambitions this year to the seizure of Korea, the defeat of the Russian army in the Liau Valley, the occupation of Mukden, and the capture of the Russian maritime arsenals with the relics of the Russian ships.

So far as we can judge by telegrams from the seat of war, the Russians mean to make a stand upon the Yalu, and in this case we can feel assured that they will speedily require all their skill and resolution to maintain such a dangerously advanced position. The Russian calculation is that the Japanese transports only allow the landing of 48,000 men at each trip, and that a fortnight must intervene before the next contingent reaches the scene of action from Japan. It is thought that, if the Japanese land in the north of the Liautung Gulf, General Kuropatkin has now sufficient men to fall upon the Japanese first landed and overwhelm them before the steamers can bring up reinforcements, and, as regards the intervention of the army of General Kuroki, the Russians consider he will take a month to cover the distance between the Yalu and Liauyang. They therefore feel confident that from his central position at Liauyang General Kuropatkin will be able to act in either direction with the weight of his whole field army against the separated fragments of the Japanese.

It may perhaps occur to some Russians that most things obvious to them will be not less obvious to the Japanese, and that the chances are that their enemy will accept all the advantages but refuse all the risks which the situation offers. The check experienced by the Japanese at the Motienling position in 1894 has caused exaggerated notions to prevail concerning the impenetrability of the mountains on this side. In the last war the main objective of the Japanese was Peking, and the detachment checked at Motienling only possessed a

secondary importance. Peking is no longer the objective, and from the Yalu forward the lessons of 1894 cease to apply. The mountains are certainly a serious obstacle, and the only carriage road, if it can be dignified by such a name, runs from the Yalu by Fenghwangchenn into the heart of the position which the Russians have fortified in this quarter. But there are other tracks, and the Japanese army is specially equipped for campaigning in this mountainous region, no fewer than six of its divisions having mountain artillery, in which arm their enemy is especially weak. The Motien and other ranges are also not precisely the theatre which a Cossack Camilla would select if desirous of scouring the plain, and the mountaineers of Daghestan have not yet reached their allotted sphere. Whether, again, Kuropatkin can collect at present a sufficient field army, after weakening himself by the provision of garrisons for the maritime fortress, is a very doubtful point.

The Russians still talk of finishing the campaign in September, and the favourite plan for the attainment of this end is a march from Vladivostok upon Gensan. It is considered that during the summer a large army can be collected between Kharbin and Vladivostok and that no insuperable difficulties intervene to prevent the march proposed. The defeat of the Japanese, the occupation of Seoul, and the humble acceptance of peace by Japan are all discounted in advance. It is a model of that essential trait in strategical plans—*rarissima simplicitas*. The appearance of Cossacks at Changseng will certainly serve as a reminder that General Kuroki's right flank is in some degree vulnerable unless the necessary measures are taken to protect it, but it is very improbable that any serious danger threatens from this side at the present juncture. We have, it is true, lost sight of General Mishchenko and his Cossacks for the best part of three weeks, and after his departure from the Lower Yalu we were informed that he was about to do something which would make our flesh creep. A raid upon Northern Korea from the north-east, and an endeavour

to strike in upon the line of communications with Pingyang and Seoul was evidently the only action that lay open to the Russians, and we should judge that the reported advance of a body of Cossacks by Songching and Pukchen marks the opening of this new phase in the operations.

The situation of the Russian commanders of the land and sea forces is full of difficulties, and is in no way simplified by the terms in which the Tsar has notified to his Viceroy the recent changes in the higher commands. As the version of this communication, which has appeared in the English Press, is somewhat truncated, and as the Imperial message to Admiral Alexeieff is a document of the highest interest, it is permissible to quote it in full from the French text of *Le Temps*, which has the appearance of being authoritative :

“ Prenant en considération l'importance de la guerre actuelle, dont le résultat doit être d'ouvrir à la Russie d'une manière définitive l'accès du Pacifique, et prévoyant qu'en votre qualité de mon lieutenant-général en Extrême-Orient, vous aurez à transporter votre résidence dans un lieu central, tel que Karbine ou toute autre ville, à votre choix, j'ai jugé utile de vous adjoindre l'aide de camp Kouropatkine, qui commandera en chef l'armée de terre et jouira des prérogatives inhérentes à ce commandement ; je vous ai adjoint de même le vice-amiral Makharof, qui commandera les forces de mer et jouira des droits de commandant en chef de la flotte.

“ J'ai la conviction que la désignation de ces officiers généraux, chefs à la fois autonomes et responsables des forces qui leur sont confiées, contribuera à garantir de votre part l'accomplissement de la tâche historique qui vous incombe, en votre qualité de mon lieutenant-général en Extrême-Orient.”

Besides containing an expression of the Imperial intentions, which will be studied with lively interest in every quarter of the globe, this telegram sounds the

death-knell of the Viceroy's supremacy which the ukase of last July conferred upon him.

He is given a gentle hint to remove himself from the scene of hostilities ; he is no longer dictator in civil, military, and naval affairs ; the command of the army and navy is taken from him and conferred upon others, who are each in their sphere supreme. It is not quite clear what duties remain for the Viceroy to perform in the pursuit of the historic mission. The army, and with it presumably the security of the railway and frontiers, passes to General Kuropatkin and becomes autonomous ; the Viceroy retains some of the attributes, but loses all the prerogatives of power. The navy also slips from his hands, and each service does what is good in its own eyes, no central impulse remaining to direct these separate forces to a single end. Who is to decide if the army and navy disagree upon a course of action ? Who is to settle the relative importance of the replenishing of one service or the other by means of the railway ? Not the Viceroy, certainly ; since he has no longer any voice in the matter at all, and, in case of difference of opinion, no one can reconcile conflicting interests but the Imperial master. "God is so high and the Tsar so far," says the Russian peasant, and there is something to be said for the traditional practice of the Russian Tsars to accompany their armies in the field and decide vexed questions off-hand by a word from which there is no appeal.

If Alexeieff had been a *roi fainéant*, he might have passed down to a lower plane of importance without serious damage to his own dignity or to the machine of government ; but he has, on the contrary, been extremely masterful, and has made his power and influence widely felt. It is not easy, even for an autocrat *in partibus*, to throw off the purple or divide the crown with equals. The civil administration still remains in his hands ; but, now that a state of war exists and the entire country is practically a foreign territory in Russian military occupation, the sphere of a civil administrator escapes accurate delimitation.

If the Viceroy is not on the best of terms with the general commanding the army of Manchuria, and if, as rumour declares, he is altogether hostile to Admiral Skrydloff, the successor to poor Makaroff, we can sympathise with his desire to terminate an almost intolerable situation, and understand the reported offer of his resignation. Nor can it be at all congenial to General Kuropatkin to be forced to refer all questions concerning the civil administration to an authority at a distance, who would not be human if he did not entertain somewhat bitter feelings concerning his virtual supersession. On the other hand, the Tsar probably feels that it would be a sign of vacillation if his lieutenant were recalled in the hour of stress, and that such an open acknowledgment of the failure of the whole policy underlying the ukase of last July would injuriously affect the prestige of Russia, and throw a stronger light upon the misfortunes of the first weeks of war.

In view of the predominance now assumed by the land operations, the secondary *rôle* devolving on the shattered squadron, and the altogether subordinate functions of the civil administration, it is difficult to deny that the concentration of all powers in the hands of the general in command would seem to be the natural course dictated by the situation. It should be easy to attach to the general a civil bureau charged with the minor duties which now occupy the Viceroy, and General Kuropatkin would then be in a position to combine all energies to a single purpose. An alternative is the departure of the Tsar for the seat of war—a proposal to which rumour continually recurs. The Russian Tsars have generally accompanied their armies in the field, and their presence has often proved of great advantage. It may, perhaps, be recalled that during the war with Turkey in 1828–1829 the reigning Tsar crossed the Danube with his army, and was accompanied by the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, Sir William à Court, first Lord Heytesbury, who has left

an interesting account of the events of that time. The mobilisation of the *Corps Diplomatique* at St. Petersburg, in the event of another Imperial progress to the seat of war, is not, perhaps, to be anticipated, and would cause some consternation in that amiable circle; but it would be not altogether unprecedented for the chiefs of the two states now at war to encourage the armies of operation by their presence at the post of danger.

In turning now to the question of the Russian army itself, it may be well, before decisive operations begin, to review once more, by the light of the latest information, the actual position of affairs on the Russian side. We read in the columns of one of the most esteemed and best-informed of French newspapers—namely, *Le Temps*—that the Russian army is double the strength of its enemy, and that additional reinforcements are only required, so that 150,000 men may be sent to Peking to place a term upon Chinese machinations. Even English journals, drawing a thousand colours from the light, show a disposition to accept Russian assurances of the same character at their face value. The exaggerated estimates¹ of the strength of the Russian army in Manchuria which are thus made in various quarters render it necessary to sound a note of warning, and to endeavour to reduce the figures to more exact proportions bearing some sort of relation to the facts.

Like the heavy father of drama, Russia has always endeavoured to make business out of bulk and to impress opinion with the idea of ponderosity. The disasters of Charles XII. and Napoleon have created a legend of Russian invincibility which has hypnotised Europe, and reduced the public opinion of the world to a state of mind allowing it to accept with credulity the most preposterous claims to military pre-eminence. All countries have more or less groaned under this tyranny,

¹ It should be remembered that in the early period of the campaign very little was known to the public of the strength and dispositions of the opposing armies.

and it has affected the entire course of international politics throughout a long series of years, to the great advantage of Russian ambitions, legitimate and other. If words could kill, the Japanese would long ago have been finished, since the vast array of which organs of opinion under the spell of Russian influence are so constantly speaking would seem to leave our poor allies not a shade or a shadow of a chance of ultimate victory.

We are now told that within a few days there will be half a million Russians in the field, and that the Russian steam roller will then begin its entirely inevitable progress. There will be, we are told, 200,000 men on the Yalu, and other armies springing up on all sides, so completely armed and ready that the Olympian precedent will be quite outdone.

It does not seem to occur to the Russians that the average reader of telegrams concerning "Russia's vast army" is lost in wonder why these formidable masses remain quiescent, and do not at once proceed to eat up the Japanese, who offer themselves ready victims within touch of the Russian outposts. If 500,000 Russians are not sufficiently confident to advance and drive the enemy into the sea, how many of the Tsar's soldiers are considered the equals of one Japanese? General Kuropatkin is not considered a timid leader, and, though he has no experience of handling large masses on a theatre of war, we cannot be expected to believe that he would not be amply satisfied if he had anything like these numbers under his hand. If the "dignity and might of Russia" are not satisfied by the assembly of half a million men, they run a very serious risk of never being satisfied at all.

No one in England has any desire to depreciate the patriotic efforts which are being made in Russia to cope with an exceedingly complex and difficult situation; but we all have a greater interest in keeping ourselves informed of solid facts than of fluid opinions. If we divide the latest Russian figures by two, we shall remain

on the safe side. So far as can be ascertained from the numbers present at the outbreak of war, and from those brought up since February 8, General Kuropatkin has not, all told, more than 250,000 men under his command at the present moment. From these considerable deductions have to be made before we can arrive at the strength of the field army. There are not fewer than 45,000 men of the army at Port Arthur and Vladivostok, 30,000 more guarding the railway, and 10,000 occupied in other duties on the line ; there are probably 10 per cent. in hospital or convalescent, and the garrisons of towns and fortified points other than those on the railway absorb another 20,000 men.

These numbers, amounting to 130,000 men in all, cannot be readily reduced. The maritime fortresses cannot be left unguarded so long as they are retained, since they are open to attack at any moment. The constant attempts upon the railway make it imperative to retain the guards in their positions, since the preservation of the line is vital to the successful prosecution of the campaign, and, in fact, it is jealously guarded throughout its entire length. There remain no more than 120,000 men to form the field army, and the extent of territory this army has to occupy or to cover against the attack of an enemy supreme at sea makes it impracticable to mass the whole for a united blow.

Since the outbreak of war there have been brought from Western Russia some 36 third battalions for the East Siberian Rifle Regiments, 10,000 reserves to complete the first and second battalions of the same corps, 8,000 reserves to complete to war strength the two brigades of the 31st and 35th Divisions sent to the East last year, besides a number of quick-firing batteries and various units mobilised in Siberia. From all these resources the four Siberian army corps may have been completed to an average strength of 40,000 to 45,000 men apiece, and may each contain approximately 36 battalions, 12 squadrons, and 8 batteries, leaving over a couple of independent divisions of Cossacks. As two

brigades, now divisions, of East Siberian Rifles have been detached for the defence of Port Arthur and another for that of Vladivostok, the available field army is certainly not in excess of 120,000 men, and is probably rather less. We anticipated that the Russian field army might be expected to reach the total of 150,000 men by the middle of May, and there is no sign as yet that these limits will be exceeded. It always has been, and, so long as the railway is intact, it always will be possible to bring up more men, if all the horses, waggons, and equipments which are the concomitants of mobile force are omitted ; but it is useless for Russia's purposes to amass a horde of infantry in Manchuria without transport and tied to the railway. Even as things stand we are without information as to the mobility of the Russian field army, and some acute observers on the Continent declare that not one-half the necessary number of waggons and animals were assembled when hostilities began, even for the use of the troops then in East Asia. In view of all these considerations it is a somewhat large assumption to hold that the Russian army is double the strength of the Japanese, or to believe that 150,000 surplus troops can be directed upon Peking.

So far as can be ascertained, one army corps is still posted about Nikolsk and Ninguta, in the vicinity of Vladivostok ; the 2nd and 3rd are south of Mukden and on the Yalu, while the 4th, of more recent formation, is probably still at Kharbin. Under the hand of General Kuropatkin himself are certainly not more than 70,000 men, and these have to occupy the line of the Yalu, to defend Fenghwangchenn and the Motien position, besides holding Niuchwang and other points on the coast where a descent is anticipated. These points are extremely numerous, and we can very well follow the direction of Russian anxieties by reading the reports which come in concerning the presence of Japanese warships, transports, and boats at various points of the extensive coast-line. Even the main field

army is greatly scattered, and the only reason why General Kuropatkin has not delivered a vigorous counter-stroke against the First Japanese Army, which offers itself to his blows, is that he has not the necessary force to act offensively owing to the drain of his garrisons and detachments, and cannot let go his hold at one point or another until the objective of his enemy becomes patent. The initiative is still with the Japanese, thanks to their supremacy upon the water, and it is impracticable for the Russian commander, with any regard for prudence, to commit himself to an advance in force into Korea while he remains in the dark as to the main line of attack of his enemy. That some troops have left Liauyang during the last few days is extremely likely. We know from the general's reports that the Japanese are extending along the Yalu, and have probably overlapped the limits of ground occupied by General Kashtalinsky's troops ; it is, therefore, necessary to look to it that the Japanese do not traverse the river in its middle reaches and outflank the Russian position on its left wing, where it is strategically vulnerable.

But attention cannot be concentrated at any one point. On the lower Yalu itself the numbers of the enemy are increasing, and it is clear from the Russian reports that boats are being prepared and pontoons made ready to force the passage. Off Tatungkau the Cossack scouts report transports, and General Mishchenko sends the same news from Sonching ; in many other quarters attack is anticipated, and General Kuropatkin remains virtually a prisoner until his course of action is dictated by the Japanese initiative.

The deployment of the Japanese army on the Yalu, and the menace of serious attack from the side of Korea, entail upon the Russians the necessity of forming front parallel with their line of communications. The disadvantages of such a position are not felt until contact is arrived at ; but, in case of failure to withstand the approaching onslaught, the position would threaten to become serious, and only a well-commanded and

mobile army could extricate itself with credit and without serious loss.

It is interesting to read the report from St. Petersburg that there are now plenty of men in Manchuria, and that the transport of troops can be suspended, an announcement which coincides with the temporary closure of communications at Lake Baikal. Russia thus for the third time makes a virtue of necessity, and for some three weeks, the Manchurian army is practically isolated from Russia and thrown upon its own resources. If Baikal is closed for this time, the army will eat up some 25,000 tons of food and forage, and in these circumstances the reports received from many sides that the country is being raided of its cattle and supplies are only what might have been expected. We hear that prices have doubled throughout East Asia, and in many quarters there is already some scarcity of food; it is quite possible that, for some time after the renewal of the through traffic, the question of supply may take precedence of reinforcement. It is not only the army of Manchuria that depends largely on the railway. The existence of a railway generally causes an atrophy in other and inferior means of communication, and, when once these are reduced, they cannot immediately be restored. Thus we read that in the district of Irkutsk alone the local authorities have succeeded in compelling the government to grant them the use of fifteen railway trucks every twenty-four hours for the service of the civil population, and it is not likely that Irkutsk stands alone. There is no feeder to the railway, even west of Baikal, for nearly 2,000 miles, and there are many towns upon the line which have learnt to depend upon the railway as much as Irkutsk, and must be suffering equally from the stoppage of supplies.

It is the intention of the Russian Government to despatch to the East the residue of the 10th and 17th Army Corps, which have been already drawn upon for reinforcements, but their transport seems to have been

delayed, and from many parts of Western Russia we have news of heavy trains, filled up with stores and supplies, encumbering the sidings and awaiting their turn to proceed. Everything, in short, has given way to the despatch of perhaps 70,000 men to the seat of war, and, so far as this operation is concerned, the movement has been successfully accomplished, almost exactly as was foreseen by those acquainted with the facilities offered by the railway. The despatch of the rest of the 10th and 17th Army Corps to the seat of war will take at least two months, so that for present purposes they need not be taken into account. Russia conceals her wounds and places a brave face upon affairs; yet history will probably say that an almost intolerable strain was thrown upon the Russian communications, and our sympathies must be given to those hard-worked officers and railway officials who are so strenuously endeavouring to force the willing Russian camel through the eye of the still inflexible Trans-Siberian needle.

With the advent of summer some relief will be experienced, since the waterways will enable supplies to be forwarded along the Amur, Sungari, and other great rivers. Nevertheless, the problem of the communications is a terrible anxiety, and it can only be by the exercise of the utmost forethought, vigilance, and prudence that the army now in Manchuria can be maintained on a level with requirements. These qualities are not those in which a Russian Administration usually excels, and when, to all the inherent difficulties, there is superadded the shock of Japanese attack and its reaction upon the rearward communications, he would be sanguine, indeed, who would prophesy an easy or an early victory for the Russian arms. *Longa injuria, longae ambages.*

CHAPTER XVI¹

THE BATTLE OF THE YALU

THE first serious land engagement of a campaign always deserves to be studied with care, in order that deductions may be drawn of a practical character. We now have the official reports from both sides concerning the battle of May 1, and these are usefully supplemented by the interesting telegram from *The Times* correspondent at Tokio published on Friday last. From these sources it is possible to gain a clear idea of the course of the battle and to draw the conclusions warranted by the facts related.

After the unsuccessful endeavour to surprise the Japanese cavalry at Chengju on March 28, the Cossacks of General Mishchenko withdrew to the Yalu, Wiju was evacuated, and no further endeavour made to resist the Japanese advance to the line of the river. But on the Manchurian side there had been a corps of observation posted even before the outbreak of war, and as the Russian numbers increased it became possible to reinforce the troops at this point so as to place a living barrier before Kuroki's army. The Russian force on the Yalu appears to have been at first commanded by a brigadier, then by a general of division, and finally by General Sassulitch, commanding the 2nd Siberian Army Corps, and the importance of the Russian force doubtless grew with the rank of its commander.

¹ *The Times*, May 3 and 10, 1904.

Although the numbers actually engaged in the battle of May 1 only amounted on the Russian side to sixteen battalions of infantry with forty field and eight machine-guns, it is probable that other troops were in the vicinity belonging to General Sassulitch's command. It seems evident that the feints made by the Japanese from seaward had caused Mishchenko's Cossacks to be drawn away towards the coast, while Japanese reports mention the 23rd and 27th Regiments of East Siberian infantry, which were not engaged and may have been holding points either on the upper reaches of the river or on the line of communications. However this may be, the troops which took part in the battle included only the 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, and 22nd Regiments of East Siberian infantry, each of three battalions; one battalion of the 24th Regiment; five batteries of field artillery, each of eight guns; a battery of eight machine guns, a sapper battalion, and some detachments of Cossacks of uncertain strength, or 20,000 combatants all told.

Had the other regiments and Mishchenko's Cossacks been present the numbers would have amounted to the 30,000 men named by General Kuroki in his first report, and this figure probably represented the real strength of General Sassulitch's command. It is necessary to remark that the army corps organisation appears to have completely broken down at the very outset of operations, as it did in South Africa, since these troops belong to the 1st and 3rd Army Corps, and represent a mere fortuitous collection of units, the 3rd Division, properly belonging to the 3rd Army Corps, representing the only larger unit in any measure complete.

When General Kuroki, after a difficult and fatiguing march from Seoul and Chinampo, reached the river and began to feel for his enemy at the various points of passage, he threatened the Russians over a wide front. The earlier Russian reports mention the appearance of the enemy a long distance up the river, while the Japanese navy distracted attention by threatening

descents at various parts of the coast and estuary from a direction calculated to cause the Russian commander much disquiet. The reports concerning Japanese movements were forwarded to General Kuropatkin, who should have judged that the position had been held long enough to delay the enemy, and that, in view of the ease with which either flank could be turned, and in view, besides, of the superior numbers of the enemy, an obstinate stand in such an exposed position was a manifest and unjustifiable risk. We do not as yet know General Kuropatkin's view of the situation, but he probably desired to fend off the advance of the First Japanese Army as long as possible, and may have expected that a strong and confident force of 30,000 Russians would be able to look after itself and to fall back fighting if unable to resist the passage of the river. He may have reckoned that his lieutenant could occupy successive positions until the Motienling was reached, where it became absolutely necessary to arrest the enemy or accept the loss of the whole position upon the passes leading into the Liau Valley.

During the week preceding the battle General Kuroki concentrated his army in the vicinity of Wiju and to the south-east of that town, and doubtless reconnoitred the Russian position day by day. Exclusive of detached posts, this position extended from Niangnyangching and Antushan in the south to Makau and Yushukau in the north, a distance of some twenty miles. The centre was at Kiuliencheng, a walled town about 180 ft. above the river, and, from this point southwards, the right, or Manchurian bank, has a considerable command over the left, or Korean side. Near Kiuliencheng the Ai tributary joins the main stream, and below the junction the river widens from 4,000 to 7,000 yards and runs in three channels between the islands and the mainland. The centre channel at this season is navigable by small craft, and the other channels are fordable waist-deep. The Ai River was also fordable in many places on May 1. On the right bank of the

Yalu, and at the point of junction of the two streams, the ground rises at Husan and commands the Russian position, this high ground extending northward beyond Yulchawon and rendering the Russian left insecure from Makau to Yushukau. Husan was occupied by General Kashtalinsky with part of the 22nd Regiment up to the evening of April 30. The 9th and 10th Regiments, with two batteries, held the right of the position about Antung and to the south, while the 12th held the centre, the 11th remaining in reserve; the batteries were at first distributed along the line of front. During April 27 and 28 the Guards occupied Kulido Island, and the 2nd Division crossed to Keumchongdo, driving the Russians off, and thus bringing the centre and left of the Russian position under fire of sharpshooters on the islands and engaging their attention along their front. Further down the river the attention of the Russians had also been distracted on the 25th and 26th by a scouting attack of the flotilla, which penetrated as far as Antszshan and silenced the Russian artillery after an hour's engagement. Thus the Russians were cleverly engaged all along their front, and it was not possible for their commander to know where the impending blow was likely to fall.

The plan of the Japanese commander was to threaten attack on the lower radius of the river, to throw two divisions against Kiuliencheng, and to use the remaining division in a wide flanking movement across the river on his right.

During the nights preceding the action of Sunday, battery emplacements were prepared on the left bank south-west of Wiju, so cunningly masked that their existence remained undetected, and here, as well as on the islands, a large force of artillery was placed in position, including twenty-four or more field guns of the Guards and 2nd Division, besides a number of heavier guns and howitzers. From these positions a very destructive fire could be brought to bear upon the centre of the Russian line and the left flank about

Makau, a locality which seems to correspond with the Potietintzy of the Russian reports.

On April 29 the 12th Division began to bridge the river at Sukuchin, thirteen miles above Kiuliencheng, the point of passage of 1894, where the Yalu flows in a single stream 280 yards wide; the operation was completed by 8 a.m. on the morning of the 30th, and the division crossed that day with only twenty-seven casualties. At 10 a.m. on the 30th the masked batteries near Wiju opened fire and cannonaded the Russian position at Kiuliencheng until five in the afternoon. This fire occupied the attention of the Russians and prevented them from interfering with the critical operation of the 12th Division. The advance of the 12th Division from Sukuchin towards the Ai caused General Kashtalinsky to withdraw the 22nd Regiment to the right bank. The Guards Division by the night of the 29th had completed five bridges, utilising the islands of Kulido and Ochokdo, and crossed to Husan, while the naval flotilla occupied the attention of the Russians lower down. The 2nd Division threw a bridge to Lanjado and another to Keumgangdai, making ready to cross from the islands to the centre of the Russian position. By the night of Saturday, April 30, General Kuroki had the best part of three divisions within striking distance of his enemy's left, and a very superior force of artillery ready to open fire. He therefore telegraphed to Tokio that he proposed to attack at dawn on Sunday.

General Kashtalinsky seems to have taken a perfectly correct view of the situation, but whatever form his representations or advice may have assumed, it is evident that his senior meant fighting, and gave him a direct order to hold his ground. There was, therefore, nothing left for the 3rd Division but to see the matter through and do its best. The Japanese orders for May 1 were as follows. The 12th Division was to cross the Ai at 8 a.m., to drive the enemy from the bluffs on the right bank, and then to intercept the retreat of the

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Russians from Kiuliencheng. The Guards were to cross by the bridges they had thrown, to pass over Husan and cross the Ai on the left of the 12th Division at 8 a.m., and attack Makau and Yushukau. The 2nd Division was to cross from Keumgangdai and attack Kiuliencheng, then, turning down stream, to drive the enemy from Antung. The troops reached their assigned positions by 4 a.m., and everything was in readiness for the battle.

The Japanese were astir betimes on Sunday, May 1, and by five in the morning the 12th Division deployed on a four-mile front, its right extending to Kiauhokau, and advanced boldly upon the fords of the Ai, covered by its guns and by the flanking fire of the Wiju batteries, which opened fire at 7 a.m. On the Russian side the fords were held by the three battalions of the 22nd Regiment, while the 12th was on the hills behind, supported by the 2nd and 3rd Batteries of the 6th Brigade and some machine-guns. Owing to the necessity for closing in to cross at the more practicable fords, the Japanese presented themselves in close formations at one moment, and suffered heavy loss. Nevertheless, they pressed on, while on their extreme right the left battalion of the 22nd Russian Regiment was routed and General Kashtalinsky's flank turned. Regardless of losses, the 12th Japanese Division forded the Ai River, which was breast-deep, and began to swarm upon the position and subdue the fire of the defenders. The Guards and the 2nd Division also crossed, the latter especially coming under a hot fire, while many men were carried off their feet by the stream; but the passage was won, and the Russian positions assaulted with the utmost impetuosity. It was not until midday, seven hours after the opening of the fight, that the first Russian reinforcement arrived, two battalions of the 11th Regiment and the 3rd Battery of the 3rd Brigade reaching the sorely-pressed commander. It was already too late to save the position, but it was all-important to make a stand until the 9th and 10th Regiments south of Antung



GENERAL KUROPATKIN

should have rejoined. The 11th Regiment and Lieut.-Colonel Mouravsky's battery sacrificed themselves for the safety of their comrades, and made a fine defence about Homutang, while, covered by these troops, the 12th and 22nd Regiments withdrew.

Meanwhile the Guards Division had crossed on the left of the 12th, and the two began to envelop the devoted regiment and batteries. It was at this time that the heavy losses of the 11th occurred; yet these fine troops held out against overwhelming numbers until close upon 3 p.m., when the first battalion of the 10th Regiment, hastening up from the right, relieved the pressure and enabled a withdrawal to be begun. The three field batteries and the machine-guns had also done well, and it is no discredit to them to have lost their guns and "poulmettes" or bullet-scatterers after the fall of the greater number of their horses.

The 2nd Japanese Division, after crossing the river, was directed upon Antung, doubtless in the belief that a large Russian force was still holding this point. None of the reports detail the incidents of the retreat with much precision, and the silence on this point appears to indicate that the good countenance shown by the 11th and 12th Regiments had not been without its effect.

If we regard this action dispassionately, with the view of anticipating what the future may have in store for us, we shall probably conclude that in all respects save one the combatants are worthy of each other. It is in the higher command that Russia has failed so disastrously and fallen so lamentably far below the sanguine expectations of her friends, and neither arms nor courage avail if the sacred fire of leadership burns low.

If the prime responsibility for this disaster falls, as it must, upon General Kuropatkin, it may also be admitted that his chief subordinate on the Yalu served him excessively ill. General Sassulitch knew that his flank was turned on the evening of the 30th, and that Kashtalinsky had only six battalions to place in line upon the left.

He knew that a strong force was approaching the banks of the Ai, that the stream was fordable, and that failure here would jeopardise the whole line of battle and roll up his corps from north to south. Yet he did nothing, and left his subordinate to fight unaided for seven hours with his two batteries, some machine-guns, and six battalions against an overwhelming force of artillery and the twelve battalions of the 12th Division, backed up by two other intact and fresh divisions of the same strength.

However fine may have been the attack of the 12th Japanese—and it is certain that it was led with skill and resolution deserving of the warmest praise—it is fair to say that there are not six battalions in Europe capable of withstanding the shock of two Japanese divisions, and that no soldier can have a word to say against the two regiments which failed in attempting the impossible. Once the left was turned and the position on this side crowned by the victorious Japanese, the day was lost. Nevertheless, the 11th Regiment and a fresh battery held their own upon a position in support, and, although eventually overborne by the rising tide of the attack of the Guards, did all that lay in mortals to retrieve the day, and by their steadfastness averted an even more overwhelming catastrophe.

If, from the point of view of the higher command, the battle on the Yalu is all the more damning for Russian leadership the more it is studied, it is also true to say that the Russian troops maintained their ancient reputation and allow the friends of Japan no promise of facile victories. A coldly impartial judgment of the combat affords no ground for anticipating a speedy conclusion of the war given fairly equal numbers, unless Russian generals continue to place their men in situations where defeat is certain without the occurrence of a miracle. Whether the Russians will ever oppose equal or preponderating numbers to their enemy is another question, but it seems to be clear that they have no particular reason to anticipate victory until they do.

For Japanese leading, pluck, and admirable organisation no praise can be too high. Colonel Vannovsky, late Russian military attaché in Japan, recently made the unfortunate statement that he did not expect anything extraordinary from General Kuroki; but the question of immediate interest is not whether we may expect anything extraordinary from Japanese generals, but whether the talent of Russian generals comes up to the average of the ordinary.

As a model of troop-leading the battle on the Yalu was a very brilliant affair, proving that the Japanese Staff possesses military merit of the highest order. The men were also splendid, and the whole military machine worked like clockwork.

Owing to the great preponderance of the Japanese artillery and the appearance of heavy field guns on the battlefield, it is not possible to compare the merits of the rival gunners; but it is certain that the Japanese understand how to combine the action of infantry and guns, and have the genius for modern battle very highly developed.

Not the least admirable detail of the Japanese service is the pontoon train, which performed such useful service. The Japanese pontoon is 24 ft. long, 4 ft. wide, and has a buoyancy of 5,500 lb. It is divided into two halves, each of which can be used as a boat, while these again are divisible into three sections, two of which form a load for a pack animal. Thus roadless and mountainous country has no terrors for the Japanese pontooner, and some of us may recall with a shudder those enormous and ponderous barges which were dragged painfully about the valley of the Tugela by long teams of oxen, and may wonder what the Japanese attaché thought of the art of British war.

When the Emir Mahmud came down the Nile with 20,000 warriors and sat down in the Atbara position far away from his 50,000 friends at Omdurman and within striking distance of the Anglo-Egyptian army, he established a precedent which the Russians have slavishly

followed. He was destroyed; and if we compare Russian with Dervish strategy the balance of merit rests with the Khalifa, since neither he nor his brave emirs were in a position to multiply their own experiences by reading and reflection, the principal distinction between civilised men and barbarians. If the defeat on the Yalu was thoroughly well deserved by the Russians, the victory of the Japanese was none the less highly meritorious. They reaped the full harvest of their maritime successes, utilising the aid of their river flotilla; they wasted no time in discursive and aimless fighting, and when the hour struck they acted decisively and with their whole united force. After all the appalling incompetence which some modern campaigns have introduced to our notice, it is a pleasure to the soldier, whatever it may be to the humanitarian, to see the sword once more wielded by a master of fence.

Although the defeat of a fraction of the Tsar's huge army carries with it nothing that need necessarily be decisive, the consequences of this battle promise to be far-reaching indeed. It is a profound humiliation for a great military empire. Rivals and subject races alike have waited for Russia to make good her boasts and affirm the predominance to which she both aspires and pretends. She has given battle on ground of her own choosing, and has been badly beaten by a despised and Oriental enemy. The echoes of the battle¹ will reverberate afar, and distant is the day when the story will weary in the telling, among the races of the unforgiving East.

¹ The Japanese lost 318 killed, including 5 officers, and 783 wounded, including 33 officers; 1,363 Russian dead were buried and 613 made prisoners. The Japanese captured 21 3-in. quick-firing field guns, 8 machine-guns, 1,021 rifles, besides ammunition, clothing, tents and provisions.

CHAPTER XVII¹

THE LANDING OF THE SECOND ARMY

ADMIRAL Togo's perseverance has at last met with well-merited reward.

The necessity for securing the safety of the maritime communications of the army by all possible means had led him to make two previous attempts to block the narrow entrance channel to Port Arthur by sinking merchant vessels in the fairway. On February 24 five ships were sent in manned by 77 volunteers, but despite the utmost coolness and audacity on the part of these men the attempt failed. At 2 a.m. on March 27 the effort was renewed, and four steamers of 2,000 tons each were sent in to their doom. This operation was directed by Commander T. Hirose, who in this, as in the previous attempt, displayed the highest qualities of skill and daring. Nevertheless, this gallant effort again failed, and the leader of it met a noble death.

The Japanese are not people to be deterred from their purpose by preliminary failures, and as it was considered indispensable to secure the Second Army from any molestation on the part of the Russian ships in Port Arthur, the Japanese navy prepared once more to sacrifice themselves for the national cause.

Of the eight old steamers, aggregating over 17,000 tons, which were driven into the entrance channel to Port Arthur on the night of May 2, despite mines, batteries, and torpedoes, no fewer than five reached

¹ From articles in *The Times* of May 2, 7, 9 and 12, 1904.

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their allotted positions at the entrance to the channel, and, of these, two broke through the booms and were sunk in the fairway. It is declared that the exit of any vessel larger than torpedo craft is now impossible, and, if this prove to be the case, the landing operations now in progress on an extensive scale will gain very considerably in security.

The following is the text of Admiral Togo's report :—

“ Combined fleet effected 3rd May the third blocking operation of Port Arthur.

“ *Akagi*, *Chokai*, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th destroyer flotillas, 9th, 10th, 14th torpedo-boat flotillas with steamers started 2nd May.

“ Strong wind soon arising greatly hindered movement.

“ Commander ordered to stop operation, but the order did not reach, and eight steamers proceeded and dashed harbour despite enemy's searchlight, fortress fire, observation mines, and mechanical mines.

“ Five steamers gained harbour mouth, especially the *Mikawa Maru* and *Totomi Maru*, breaking booms, reached further inside.

“ Entrance is considered effectively blocked, at least for cruisers and battleships.

“ Three other steamers sunk before reaching mouth.

“ Our flotillas remained till morning and rescued half of the crews of the sunken steamers.

“ Torpedo-boat No. 67 steam-pipe hit and disabled, but towed away by torpedo-boat No. 70. *Aotaka* damaged port engine, but safe.

“ Flotilla's casualties three wounded, two killed ; no other damage.”

Admiral Togo added later that—

“ The undertaking, when compared with the two last attempts, involved a heavier casualty on our side owing to the inclemency of the weather and increased preparation for defence of the enemy. We could not save any of the officers and men of the *Otaru Maru*, *Sagami*

Maru, *Sakura Maru*, and *Asagawo Maru*, and I regret that nothing particular could be learned about the gallant way in which they discharged their duties, although the memory of their exemplary conduct will long survive in the Imperial navy.

"The destroyer and torpedo flotillas, besides resisting the enemy bravely, fought against the wind and waves. The torpedo flotilla closely approached the mouth of the channel and rescued more than half of the men. Torpedo-boat 67, which had a steam-pipe broken by a shell, was disabled, but her consort, torpedo-boat 70, went to her assistance and towed her away. Three of the crew were wounded.

"The destroyer *Awouta* had her port engine damaged by a shell and one sailor was killed. A sailor in the torpedo-boat *Hayabusa* was also killed by a shell."

The heroism of the officers and crews of the doomed ships was as fine as anything recorded in the annals of naval war, and, even if it stood alone, would stamp the Japanese navy as a service worthy to take rank with the best. Out of 159 men on board the steamers, only 8 officers and 36 men returned unhurt, while the whole of the remainder, including 20 officers, were killed, wounded, or missing. The success of the operation made escape difficult, while the heavy weather prevented the attendant torpedo craft from taking off all the crews, as they have gallantly done on previous occasions, when the ships went down. However much we may regret this heavy loss, we can only feel the deepest admiration for a navy which has been able to perform such a gallant act and for a nation which boasts such splendid sons. Happy indeed is the country where bravery and intelligence are combined in so just a measure!

The Japanese are following very closely the precedent of 1894 and have once more chosen Pitszewo as the point of landing for the army destined to clear the road for the attack on Port Arthur. The successful

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blocking of Port Arthur was obviously the preliminary to this action on the part of the Second Army under General Baron Oku, which had been waiting at the Hall group of islands off the west coast of Korea, massed in its transports, until the result of the Yalu and of the blocking operation became known.

It may be recalled that during the war with China, the Second Army, consisting of the 1st and 6th Divisions under Marshal Oyama, landed on October 24 at the mouth of the Huaguan River, east of Pitszewo. Then, as doubtless now, ships had to lie off four miles, and low tide exposed three miles of mud flats; nevertheless, this point is the only one on this coast, as the Russians ought to have known, where troops can be landed on the rocks at high tide, and, in matters of landing-places, beggars must not be choosers. From General Pflug's report it appears that the Japanese first appeared on the evening of the 4th and began their landing early on the 5th under cover of artillery fire from the gunboats. Nothing more formidable than a few Russian patrols was encountered, and these appear to have quickly dispersed without offering any serious opposition. A landing party of sailors under Captain Nomoto, of Admiral Hosoya's division, took the lead, and as the tide was low this party was compelled to wade ashore for 1,000 yards in water breast-deep, an operation which might have been rendered extremely difficult had the Russian patrols displayed a semblance of energy. Being unopposed, the sailors reached the shore at 7.20 a.m. and acted as a covering party, taking possession of a range of hills and planting the Japanese flag once more upon the Liautung Peninsula.

The first fleet of transports, as Admiral Hosoya describes it, began to land troops at 8 a.m. and, according to the Russian account, this first fleet consisted of 60 transports and succeeded in landing 10,000 men before night, a very remarkable feat considering the indifferent nature of the landing-place. According to another report the Second Army includes the 1st and two other

Divisions, and, in view of the numbers already landed and the absence of any effective Russian field force, the operation must be presumed to have succeeded. General Pflug adds that two columns, each about the strength of a regiment, set out in a westerly and south-westerly direction after landing, and the next point of interest will be to learn whether the mobile troops of the Port Arthur garrison are able to attack or resist the troops first landed with any hope of success. On the whole the chances appear to be against any serious interference with the Japanese plans, and as landing-piers are being erected, a second contingent of troops is expected, and a strong boom is in position to protect the transports off the shore, it may be anticipated that the Second Army will soon be ashore in sufficient strength to be quite secure.

The first objective of the army landed will certainly be Dalny and Talienwan Bay, since a more uninviting base than Pitszewo would be difficult to find, and the army attacking Port Arthur requires, before anything else, a harbour where its stores, heavy guns, and transports can be landed in all security. Talienwan was made the base in 1894 before the army moved forward for the attack on Port Arthur, and history is likely to repeat itself up to a certain point.

As for Port Arthur, it is for practical purposes already invested, and the Viceroy, like Sir John French at Ladysmith, appears to have made his second exit by the last train. At the outbreak of war Port Arthur was in a very poor state of defence; many of the land forts were unfinished and unarmed, and it is probably true that the supplies had been allowed to fall to a very low ebb. During the long period that has elapsed since hostilities began all these conditions must have entirely changed, and if Port Arthur does not prove an excessively hard nut to crack the Russian War Office should put up its shutters and retire from business.

Although the Russians now tell us that there is only a very small garrison at Port Arthur, the numbers will

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soon be accurately known to the Japanese, and it seems probable that there are at least 28,000 troops in the town besides 10,000 sailors, many of whom will probably be used ashore for the defence of this eastern Sevastopol. As to the supplies, only the Russian War Office and General Stössel's Staff are likely to know the exact quantity, but the assurance we are given that there is now a year's supplies may not be very far from the truth. It must be remembered that nearly all the Chinese coolies have been evicted or have fled, and a good part of the civil population has followed their example. There remains only the garrison, and the number of railway trains required to bring up supplies for 28,000 men for a year is by no means considerable. The chances are, therefore, that Port Arthur will not fall by famine this year, and the question that remains open is whether the Japanese will resort to simple investment, siege, or bombardment followed by assault. A great deal will depend upon the course of operations elsewhere, and particularly upon the action or inaction of the Baltic squadron.

If there is any spirit left in the Russian flotilla at Port Arthur, and if there is still a passage open by which torpedo boats and destroyers can come out, it is now or never for a night attack upon the transports; but as this must be realised on both sides it may be anticipated with some confidence that Admiral Togo's inshore squadron is keeping an uncommonly sharp look-out, and that nothing can escape unseen and unfought save by one of those lucky accidents of which no sailor is master.

The Second Army may reckon itself relatively secure from an offensive return on the part of the Russian army in the Liau Valley. There are two Japanese armies still unaccounted for, General Kuropatkin already has his hands full to repair the disaster incurred by his lieutenant on the Yalu, and a march down the Liautung Peninsula with two Japanese armies still hovering over the broad seas offers no sort of allurements whatsoever.

Even when the Second Army is landed there will be still seven active divisions thirsting for action, and behind them the reserve field armies, the composition of which in time of war is the closest secret of a general staff. There is no doubt that the organisation of reserve armies plays a part, and a very important part, in the Japanese organisation, but pundits disagree as to the exact shape these formations will assume. In any case, it is certain that not one-half the Japanese active army has yet entered the field, and that even when it has there will still remain the power of placing fresh troops in the field for any purpose the course of the campaign may dictate. If General Sakharoff and his brilliant staff at St. Petersburg are still unaware of the fact, so much the worse for their cause.

Colonel Gädke, whose letters from Kharbin contain the best information we have yet received concerning the Russian army, does not grow more optimistic concerning the fortunes of his Russian hosts as time wears on. He declares, on the contrary, that the actual beginning of the campaign is still remote, and states in one of his last letters that the Russian army will be occupied for weeks or probably for months in its mobilisation and preparations. He appears to anticipate that the Japanese will await the moment of Russian readiness. The German and Austrian military attachés with the Russian army have also been credited with the belief that serious operations would not begin before the end of August. That has been the parrot cry from the Russian side, and it has doubtless corresponded with Russian desires. These forecasts are very illuminating, but one does not quite see where the Japanese army comes in. The two armies have been in contact for some time, and nothing but a timely retreat could have prevented the serious collision which has now occurred. Considering the large force Russia has assembled south of Mukden and the contempt with which the Russian army professes to regard its enemy, it was always a matter of doubt whether General

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Kuropatkin would have been able to refuse battle, even though his better judgment had been against fighting until a larger army was assembled. The Russian army is very confident and rates its adversary very low. Time and the result of the Yalu battle will show whether this confidence is justified, but it was not, perhaps, to have been expected that the Russians would give way without a battle. The Russian army knows what Suvaroff had to say on the subject of retreats, and can hardly be expected to relish them.

The situation in the Amur district is somewhat obscure. General Linievitch, who was in command of the Army of Manchuria under the Viceroy up to the time of Kuropatkin's arrival on the scene, is said to have been appointed to the command on this side, and the Viceroy is alleged to have delegated to him certain civil powers in the district in question. It is certain that there are still some senior officers in East Asia who regard themselves as Alexeieff's men—officers who have been long in the East and are inclined to resent any encroachment upon a sphere in which they have hitherto ruled as masters. There are East Siberian as there are East Indian county families. So long as the Viceroy maintains his position and his nominees retain theirs there is some chance of friction between these contending parties. If the Russian army in the mass is a more passive tool than any other in the world, the corps of officers contains many clever, ambitious men and masterful spirits who are as free in their criticism of superiors as any regimental mess in England, and much more apt for intrigue. It is quite clear from Colonel Gädke's letters that the officers arriving from Western Russia place all the blame for past failures upon the Viceroy and his party; they criticise sharply the division of the naval squadron between the two ports, and complain that their military strength is being frittered away. It is not a favourable picture that is presented, and when the German colonel adds that the army is not ready for active operations and that the

railway is not suitable for mass transport and cannot be made so, he draws a picture of Russian unreadiness which cannot fail to impress his readers.

From the Russian official reports, dated May 8, 9, and 11, we learn that the First Japanese Army, after occupying Fenghwangchenn on the 6th, remained halted and sent out reconnaissances along the main road to Liauyang and along the parallel tracks to the right and left. Huangtiangsia, forty-four miles north-east of Fenghwangchenn, was occupied by Japanese on the 5th, and on the same day some of their troops were encountered marching north from Takushan, where the landing of a fresh army appears to have been successfully effected. On the 8th and 9th other troops, which are believed to have been the Japanese Guards Division, were reported to be marching from Fenghwangchenn towards Haicheng.

These reports of the Russian Staff, fragmentary though they are, give a better idea of the situation than the abundant rumours which come in with perplexing variety from other sources, and they seem to show that the Japanese are deploying on a wide front upon a general line running north-east and south-west through Fenghwangchenn.

Considering that the Russian field army available at and near Liauyang is stronger than that which General Kuroki commands, and that the Russian strength and position are probably well known to the Japanese, the idea that the latter are about to hurl the First Army upon Liauyang, unsupported, is contrary to all probability.

Our allies have told us much of the landings on the Liautung Peninsula—at least up to a certain point—but they wisely said nothing of their intentions on the side of Takushan, or of movements on General Kuroki's right flank, and we are still without definite news of the situation and intentions of the greater part of the Japanese army. Judging, however, from the position of the First Army between the 6th and 9th, as disclosed

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in the Russian reports, we are bound to assume that this is no isolated movement, and that other troops are combining their action with the operation thus far disclosed. The general idea seems to be a deployment on a very broad front, followed by an advance along parallel roads, or tracks over the hills, upon the Russian positions. Whether the weight of this attack will be thrown on the right, left, or centre there is nothing at present to show us, and the only thing certain is that every movement by the Japanese right is strategically the most dangerous for the Russians.

General Kuropatkin may very properly hope to unite his force and retrieve the disaster on the Yalu by a blow struck at one or other of the columns separated in the mountains. But what is simple in theory is often hard in practice. Those acquainted with the peculiar conditions of war on the Alpine frontier of Italy are aware that, even with the fine roads traversing some of the valleys in that region, an army exceeding the strength of 60,000 men cannot be usefully employed upon any single line of operations or in any single valley, since a greater number cannot be deployed and brought into action and are, therefore, only an encumbrance. In point of general accessibility the region now approached by the Japanese has something of the same characteristics, and even if it be attacked by a superior Russian force, the First Army is strong enough, provided its flanks are protected in neighbouring valleys, to resist any direct attack with success. Meanwhile the parallel columns continue their movements and threaten the flanks and rear of the attacking column. Mountain warfare, like every other form of the art of war, has changed its practice with the creation of national armies, and many things become possible and even advisable which were neither one nor the other in the good old days.

If we place ourselves in Kuropatkin's position we must admit that he is not greatly to be envied. His front is parallel with his line of retreat, and every day

that passes will make him more alive to the disadvantage. He has accumulated, according to Colonel Gädke, supplies for 200,000 up to July 1 at Liauyang and Mukden, and he must defend, destroy, or abandon them. He holds, or should hold, a concentrated position, but there his advantage ends; and these sinuous Japanese columns which begin to wind their lengths along all the mountain passes to the south and east must make it clear to him that his enemy is meditating a very big *coup* indeed.

In the Liautung Peninsula the Russians have been very energetic in repairing their damaged railway, and have contrived to bring in a train full of ammunition to the town. Nevertheless, the advance of the Second Japanese Army along the eastern shore continues, covered by the warships off the coast, and two regiments, forming the head of their advanced guard, passed the night of May 8 at Sanchilipu station. It must therefore be judged, as already assumed, that Dalny is the first objective and that the investment of Port Arthur, momentarily averted, is now accomplished, unless the garrison has been able to stay the progress of the assailant by a successful fight. In Korea itself a small party of Cossacks who slipped round the Japanese right have attacked Anju without success. As the base of the First Army will now be Antung and its communications will pass by the sea, these raids in Northern Korea are destined to be barren of consequence. Nevertheless it will be well for the Japanese to pay attention to the defence of Northern Korea, since it appears to be a favourite scheme of the Russians to cause trouble in the peninsula if they can secure a footing.

CHAPTER XVIII¹

*THE ARMY OF MANCHURIA*²

THE official accounts of the battle on the Yalu disclose the fact, hitherto rather suspected than ascertained, that the Russian army corps organisation has signally broken down. Many other circumstances combine to show us that the Army of Manchuria is still in the melting-pot, and that the finished article will not be turned out for many a long day.

It has not been the business of the allies of Japan to lay stress upon the faults which Russia has perpetrated in the organisation of her field army ; but now that the action taken has passed beyond all reasonable hope of redemption, the composition of this army may fittingly form the subject of a few remarks.

The paper organisation of the Army of Manchuria is approximately as follows :

1ST ARMY CORPS

(General Baron Stackelberg).

1st East Siberian Rifle Division : 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Regiments.

2nd East Siberian Rifle Division : 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th Regiments.

6th East Siberian Rifle Division : 21st, 22nd, 23rd, and 24th Regiments.

Artillery : Twelve batteries East Siberian Artillery.

¹ *The Times*, May 16, 1904.

² The *ordre de bataille* changed almost continually during the war until it reached the final form given in Appendix.

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Cavalry: 1st Nertchinsk Cossacks, Littoral Dragoons,
and Ussuri Cossacks.

Engineers: 1st Battalion of Sappers of East Siberia.

2ND ARMY CORPS (General Sassulitch).

5th East Siberian Rifle Division: 17th, 18th, 19th, and
20th Regiments.

7th East Siberian Rifle Division: 25th, 26th, 27th, and
28th Regiments.

8th East Siberian Rifle Division: 29th, 30th, 31st, and
32nd Regiments.

Artillery: Ten batteries East Siberian Artillery.

Cavalry: 1st Argunsk Cossacks, 1st Amur Cossacks,
and one Trans-Baikal Horse Artillery battery.

Engineers: 2nd Battalion of Sappers of East Siberia.

3RD ARMY CORPS (General Stössel).

3rd East Siberian Rifle Division: 9th, 10th, 11th, and
12th Regiments.

4th East Siberian Rifle Division: 13th, 14th, 15th, and
16th Regiments.

9th East Siberian Rifle Division: 33rd, 34th, 35th, and
36th Regiments.

Artillery: Twelve batteries East Siberian Artillery.

Cavalry: Trans-Baikal Cossack Brigade, 1st Chitinsk,
1st Veckhnie Udinsk, and one Trans-Baikal Horse
Artillery battery.

Engineers: 3rd Battalion of Sappers of East Siberia.

4TH ARMY CORPS (General Zarubaieff).

1st Siberian Reserve Infantry Division: 1st, 2nd, 3rd,
and 4th Regiments.

2nd Siberian Reserve Infantry Division: 5th, 6th, 7th,
and 8th Regiments.

3rd Siberian Reserve Infantry Division: 9th, 10th, 11th,
and 12th Regiments.

Artillery: Twelve batteries Siberian Reserve Artillery.
Cavalry unallotted.

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FRONTIER GUARDS.

Four Brigades, 23,000 men with 48 guns, now being increased to 33,000 with 80 guns.

RAILWAY TROOPS.

Trans-Amur Brigade, four battalions, 6,500 men.

Ussuri Brigade, two battalions, 3,500 men.

INDEPENDENT CAVALRY DIVISIONS.

1. Trans-Baikal Cossack Division : 2nd Veckhnie Udinsk, 2nd Argunsk, 2nd Nertchinsk, and 1st Chitinsk, with the 3rd and 4th Horse Artillery Batteries of Trans-Baikal Cossacks.
2. Siberian Cossack Division : 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th, and possibly the 6th and 9th Siberian Cossacks, all of the second and third categories. The arrival of this division in Manchuria has not yet been ascertained.

FORTRESS ARTILLERY.

Four battalions, 4,000 men, ordered to be increased to 6,000.

UNITS UNALLOTTED.

Eighteen squadrons of Cossacks of Ussuri, Amur, etc.

Corps of Russian Volunteers.

Mounted Brigade of Caucasian Volunteers (not arrived).

Two Trans-Baikal Cossack battalions.

3rd Don Cossack Battery.

Sixteen battalions of infantry of the 10th and 17th Army Corps.

Six batteries attached to above.

Sapper pontoon company and East Siberian Pontoon Battalion.

Three batteries machine-guns, attached to the 1st, 9th, and 17th East Siberian Regiments.

Heavy field artillery, numbers and calibre doubtful.

Local Volunteer corps, etc.

If all the above troops were in Manchuria, which is not the case, and if, being there, they were available to take the field, which they are not, the total combatant force would be 223,000 rifles, 21,764 sabres,

496 field, 30 horse artillery, and 24 machine-guns, besides 4,000 engineers. But we must deduct the 4th Siberian Army Corps, which is only now crossing Lake Baikal, and the Siberian Cossack Division, which has never been reported east of Baikal; we must also strike off the frontier guards with their guns, besides the railway and fortress troops. This reduces the field army available throughout the entire area of operations to 126,000 infantry, 15,000 sabres, 320 field, 30 horse, and 24 machine-guns, besides 4,000 engineers. These figures allow each unit its authorised war strength, and take no account of losses or sickness. If we assume that the war strengths are complete, which is improbable, and deduct 10 per cent. for sick and also the losses on the Yalu, the figure is reduced to 113,400 rifles, 13,500 sabres, 300 field, 30 horse, and 16 machine-guns. That is, at the outside, the field army of Manchuria at the present hour and until the 4th Army Corps begins to reach the scene of action.

Before considering the number of field troops which General Kuropatkin can have at immediate disposal south of Mukden, a few explanations respecting the four army corps are necessary. It will be seen that the backbone of the first three army corps is composed of 108 battalions of East Siberian Rifles, thirty-six to each corps. Last autumn these regiments formed six brigades, or forty-eight battalions; but by a *prikaze* of October 30 a 7th and 8th brigade were created out of the fortress regiments at Port Arthur and Vladivostok, and a 9th brigade was added later. Thus sixty new field battalions were hastily created almost out of nothing at the opening of hostilities, and even the original forty-eight battalions had themselves to be completed by drafts from Europe, since it is now known that they were only 700 strong when the war began. Each regiment of the nine brigades was next increased from two to three battalions, the men for this purpose being also drawn from western garrisons. The 48 units of last year thus grew to 108, officers and men,

equally ignorant of each other and of the country, being bundled into the ranks in primitive fashion. Thus the solidity of good regiments was impaired, and even the East Siberian Rifles, the best Russian troops in East Asia, lost something of their previous efficiency.

It was apparently the first intention to add a fourth battalion to each regiment, but this proposal appears to have been dropped, and the only further change has been an alteration of title of the East Siberian Infantry from rifle brigades to rifle divisions, and the attachment, in principle, of three to four field batteries to each division. This act, with the practical lapse of the army corps organisation, points to a momentary intention to work in divisions, each of the latter having now the same number of battalions as a Japanese division—namely, twelve—but only twenty-four to thirty-two guns against the Japanese thirty-six.

Subject to the above explanations, the organisation of the 1st Army Corps calls for no special remark. Its 6th Division was apparently under General Sassulitch on the Yalu, but only the 22nd Regiment and one battalion of the 24th took part in the fighting. As to the other two divisions of this corps, it is best to reckon them as available under Kuropatkin's hand, although the failure of correspondents to differentiate between brigades (now divisions) and regiments makes it difficult to speak with certainty.

As to the 2nd Army Corps, it appears to represent more a counsel of perfection than a solid fact. The 7th and 8th Divisions of this corps form the nucleus of the garrisons of Port Arthur and Vladivostok. They are generally omitted by foreign military critics from their calculations of the Russian field army, and until proof is given that they have been withdrawn from the fortresses they may perhaps be ignored. In any case, they are troops of secondary value, since their 24 battalions have been evolved from six existing in time of peace—that is to say, that they have been quadrupled on mobilisation. It is, of course, possible that a division may

be made up of the four unallotted regiments of the 10th and 17th Corps, and in this case the 2nd Army Corps would consist of two divisions.

In the 3rd Army Corps the 9th Division is in like case with the 7th and 8th—that is to say, newly formed from heterogeneous elements—while Kashtalinsky's 8rd Division has recently been badly mauled; the 4th Division, however, is intact and available, though its position has not yet been ascertained. It was at first the intention to bring up the remainder of the 10th and 17th Army Corps from the west and to unite them with the two brigades of these corps sent to Manchuria last year, but, probably owing to the extraordinary difficulty of moving the vast transport of a regular corps over the Trans-Siberian, this project was postponed, and the 4th Army Corps was created out of the Siberian regiments of reserve and given precedence upon the railway.

At the outbreak of war the Siberian military district had two reserve brigades, each of four battalions, or eight in all. From these meagre elements three divisions of 48 battalions were created—that is to say, that each existing battalion gave birth to five others, on a principle long accepted for Russian reserve troops, but never yet seriously tested in war. It is not wonderful that the arrival of the 4th Army Corps is still awaited, neither will it be wonderful if it fails to stand the racketing of another Yalu fight on a larger scale. The Russian reserve troops are in the nature of militia, and the preference given to them over the regular battalions of regiments in the west is only another proof that Russia has entirely failed even now to grasp the problem with which she is confronted.

As regards the artillery of the first three army corps, the Russian military press now describes all the 272 guns as quick-firers, and we must assume this to be correct. In certain units there has been an expansion not dissimilar to that of the reserve infantry, the twelve Siberian batteries, for instance, having been evolved out of only two existing in February last, and others

are in like case. A more rash and inexcusable blunder it would be difficult to perpetrate.

Anything is apparently considered good enough to beat Japan, and the cavalry is composed almost entirely of Cossacks of the Eastern *voiskos*, who have no serious experience of war or campaigning. To form General Simonoff's independent division of Siberian Cossacks, which has disappeared since its mobilisation, there were only 18 squadrons existing in the Siberian military district last February, and these have expanded into six regiments, the deficiency in officers being made good by volunteers from the Russian dragoons. The greater part of the rest of the Cossacks comes from the Trans-Baikal *voisko*, which possessed 24 squadrons, or four regiments, before the war. General Rennenkampf's independent division alone has four regiments, and there are four others with the corps cavalry. None of these Cossacks are to be reckoned the equals of those whose homes are on the Don and to the north of the Caucasus, and it has been with silent satisfaction that opponents of Russian policy in the East have watched the steady influx into East Asia of elements which certainly possess military value, but of a kind that can only be reckoned as the second best.

Given the extreme difficulty of maintaining more than 250,000 men in Russian East Asia, until the railway is radically improved, and given also Japanese efficiency and numbers, it was obvious that every man and every regiment Russia put in the field should have been of the highest quality to enable this campaign to be waged with a serious prospect of success. The Siberian and Baikal reservists are certainly fine, hardy fellows, and on the score of raw material we can only take off our hats to the Russian regiments. But, *quâ* army, Kuropatkin's force is a shabby improvisation, possessing none of the qualities that make an army formidable save good arms, gallantry, and fine physique. The men at St. Petersburg responsible for this caricature of organisation have much to answer for. Our

own pride has been too rudely shaken in the last few years for us to re-echo those insults, sarcasms, and prophecies of doom which were showered upon us from Russia four years ago. Every fault that we committed Russia has copied, measure for measure, and she has only outdone us by losing in her first encounter one gun more than we lost in three years of a harassing but never doubtful war. But, at least, we met improvisation by improvisation, and we were not called upon to dash our hastily formed levies upon the lines of a numerous and highly organised regular army, backed up by the adjacent and resistless weight of a patriotic and united people nearly fifty millions in number.

It is very unconvincing for the *Novoe Vremya* to lament that Russia is only now aroused to the sense of her danger. If Russian journalists had read *The Times*, instead of confiding in the optimism of the Central European press, they might perhaps have deserved better of their country. But this is not all. If the Russian Government will turn up the *dossier* of the allied operations against Peking, deposited among the archives of the Russian War Office, they will find the Japanese army described with almost extravagant praise and its high efficiency lauded in no measured terms. We may, of course, be told that these papers were not officially brought to the notice of the Foreign Department; such things have happened to us, and the course of events has so closely resembled our own experiences that one compliment of imitation the more is of a nature to afford us no surprise. Another and an equally futile excuse put forward to account for the recent defeats is that hitherto only indifferent troops have been opposed to Japan, and that, when the main army deploys, with all the pomp and circumstance of Russian war, then we shall see what we shall see. These declarations are not reassuring. The 3rd and 6th East Siberian Rifle Divisions engaged on the Yalu are undoubtedly among the best troops Russia has in East Asia, and they are infinitely superior to regiments of

new formation like the 7th, 8th, and 9th Divisions, and still more so to the reserve divisions of Siberia. It is rather because Russia had the very *élite* of her East Asian troops in her vanguard on the Yalu that their rout, with the loss of 3,000 men and 28 guns, has caused this intense perturbation at Kuropatkin's headquarters.

Bearing all these facts in mind, let us see what numbers General Kuropatkin may possess to meet the Japanese onset. We must allow him the bulk of the 1st, 2nd,¹ 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 9th Divisions of East Siberian Rifles, which give 72,900 rifles after deducting sick and losses; there are 3,000 sappers, perhaps 6,000 Cossacks, and 208 field guns. It is safest to reckon that Kuropatkin has not fewer than 86,000 men under his hand, and if the 16 battalions of the 10th and 17th Corps have joined him, his available force towards the middle of May would be 100,000 men with 256 guns, not counting heavy batteries. There may be less if the war establishments have not been completed, but there cannot well be more. There is no sign as yet that the 4th Army Corps has made sufficient progress to authorise its inclusion in the field army, although a few detachments may have been sent to Mukden. No one has seen the Siberian Cossack Division east of Baikal, while Rennenkampf's Trains-Baikal Division has been reported at Ninguta, and it has probably found the raiding parties now in North-East Korea.

Then come in some very serious questions. Are the transport and supply of this improvised army assured? Are all the horses, carts, and waggons for the regimental, divisional, and corps transport complete? Are the ammunition and supply columns, trains, and parks provided? Is there a coolie or pack transport corps ready, on a military basis, to allow freedom of movement in the mountains? Is the army, in short, mobile, or is it not? These questions are vital, and the course of the pending

¹ The 2nd Division apparently remained at or near Vladivostok throughout the campaign. The 4th Division, as will appear later, was at Port Arthur.

operations will disclose whether the mass of this army is chained to the railway or whether it is not.

Russia has gained much, very much, in nearly every one of her modern campaigns, especially towards their close, by inducing the world to credit her with vast forces she never possessed. The same procedure has been followed as of old, and even reputable British agencies have spread abroad, presumably in good faith, the most fantastic legends of Russian might. It would be unkind to recall or narrate them. But if the procedure has been the same, the result has not. We are far from the days of Adrianople and San Stefano, and if Russia still lives in them, other nations have passed on. Military intelligence has become a fine art, and the tangled web of deceit is readily pierced. The world has become a vast international whispering gallery, the listeners able to give just value to recorded sound. All that has been achieved by exaggerated estimates of Russian power has been chagrin and deep disappointment when performance has lagged so lamely behind promise. If Russia and Russia's friends are profoundly depressed by the first disasters of the war, one can only declare that their disillusion is entirely of their own making. It may not be a solace, but it is a fact.

Such as it is, the field army of Manchuria now stands on a front of nearly 100 miles from Mukden to Niuchwang, facing east parallel to its single line of communications, and with a single line of retreat. Even the possession of the railway, affording some help to transfer troops from one portion of the line to another, cannot in any serious measure atone for the defects of a fundamentally false position. This army is now being assailed by the enveloping attack of Japanese armies superior in strength, with a dozen different lines of retreat and as many or more secure bases on the coast under the protecting guns of their warships. Let the Russian army strike back where it will, bayonet and all, even tactical success offers nothing necessarily decisive. Land cannot injure sea, but sea can injure land.

Port Arthur meanwhile, with its 35,000 men, is stalemated, as every one foresaw : the forces at Vladivostok, Kharbin, and elsewhere are mere spectators. In Japan, other armies remain in reserve, ready to intervene if their services are needed. As an example of intelligent and scientific use of military force by a maritime empire, the plan of the Japanese Staff, now so rapidly developing, is unique and unparalleled, and if success can never be commanded in war, it has at least on this occasion been deserved.

It now remains for the Japanese army to justify the audacity of the national strategy by fresh valour on the battlefields. The hitherto unbroken sequence of successes both by land and sea encourages the belief that the Japanese army will not be found wanting in the supreme test which appears to await it. It is only by means of the intervention of a numerous and highly-trained army that the harvest prepared by naval victories can be garnered. It is useless to sow when there are none to reap.

We are told that General Kuropatkin is a great strategist ; but a man who deliberately exposed a third of his army to certain defeat has yet to justify his claim to the title. The Russian general may possess, but has yet to disclose, the talent of command.

CHAPTER XIX ¹

THE SITUATION TOWARDS THE END OF MAY

MOLTKE is credited with the saying that, to succeed in war, a nation requires the four G's—*Geld*, *Geduld*, *Genie*, and *Glück*.

It is the last, the ever-inconstant and intangible luck, that failed Japan when one-sixth ² of her battle-ship-capital foundered with the splendid *Hatsuse*. Nothing that human foresight can have prevented seems to have been wanting in naval precaution on the part of those on board, and the loss of this fine ship can only be attributed to one of those fatal mischances inseparable from all kinds of warfare, but most of all from war upon the seas.

Admiral Togo's first report of this disaster was as follows:—

“On May 15, when ten miles south-east of Liautieshan with other vessels, the *Hatsuse* was struck by the enemy's mechanical mines and sunk. Just then a Russian flotilla of sixteen torpedo-boat destroyers approached, but was repulsed by our cruisers, which saved 300 of the *Hatsuse's* crew, including Admiral Nashiba and Captain Nakao.”

In a subsequent report Admiral Togo said:—

“I regret to have to report a third misfortune.

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of May 20, 23, and 26, 1904.

² It was not until after the great battle in the Tsushima Straits a year later that the loss of the Japanese battleship *Yashima* was officially admitted.

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“ On Sunday morning I received a wireless message from Admiral Dewa saying :—

“ ‘ To-day at 5 a.m., while returning from the work of blocking Port Arthur, I encountered a dense fog north of the Shantung Promontory. The *Kasuga* collided with the port stern of the *Yoshino*, which was sunk. The *Kasuga*’s boats saved ninety of the *Yoshino*’s crew. A dense fog still continues.’

“ This has been a most unfortunate day for our navy. While the fleet was watching the enemy off Port Arthur the *Hatsuse* struck an enemy’s mine. Her rudder was damaged and she sent a message for a ship to tow her. One was being sent when another message brought the lamentable report that the *Hatsuse* had struck another mine and had sunk immediately after. She was then ten knots off the Liautieshan Promontory. There was no enemy in sight, and her loss must have been caused by a mine or submarine. Three hundred officers and men were saved. She sank in thirty minutes. While she was sinking sixteen of the enemy’s torpedo craft appeared but were driven off by our fleet.

“ The report is somewhat vague on account of some of it having been received by wireless telegraphy.”

The deepest sympathy is felt throughout the Anglo-Saxon world with the Emperor of Japan, his nation, and his navy at this most untimely and irreparable loss. Many a hundred brave seamen have been engulfed with the battleship and her lesser consort, which succumbed to the ram of the *Kasuga* upon the same fatal day, and the resulting loss of life constitutes a national calamity for our brave allies. Blind fate, indeed, which chose the moment when the navy’s task had been so well done to prove once more the instability of human endeavour and the feebleness of man !

The Japanese navy has proved itself worthy of taking rank with the best during the arduous struggle of the past three months, and has found a way of

wearing down its enemy by a process of attrition, although an open fight in blue water has been denied to its valour by the misplaced prudence of its foe. It is not without sorrow that we can contemplate the loss of so many brave men, whose sole motive has been to gain and to deserve the applause of their Emperor and the approval of their country. Spartas and Spartans are rare in the twentieth century scheme of life, and the heroism of Japanese seamen, like the whole-hearted patriotism of the race from which they spring, should be alike a matter for honour and a subject for emulation on the part of those who can still admire national constancy and deeds of daring in the domain of war.

However much we may deplore the loss of life which has accompanied this double misfortune, we must also recognise the inhuman truth that Japan can better spare 20,000 men than a first-class battleship. Loss of life is only a temporary calamity to a nation of nearly fifty millions, since when men fall others can take their place, and the cry of "another for Hector!" finds a ready and an eager response. But the *Hatsuse* cannot be replaced, and has probably gone down in water too deep to make salvage operations practicable.

Whether the mine which caused the loss was of Russian or Japanese design is of very little moment. It is certain that mining and counter-mining have been resorted to upon a very extensive scale, and that the energies of both combatants have been directed to the removal or destruction of these formidable engines whenever their presence could be detected. These clearing operations, combined with the constant recurrence of severe weather, have probably set many mines adrift, and the waters of the Yellow Sea are decidedly dangerous for the traffic of all vessels, whether of peace or war.

The presence of warships near Port Arthur can easily be accounted for by the nature of the plan of campaign now steadily developing. On one side an investing army draws near Port Arthur, and relies upon

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the navy for effectual and local assistance; on the other, the main field army awaits the arrival of reinforcements from Japan, themselves best covered by the constant presence of the navy at the only points from which serious danger threatens. The *Hatsuse*, in short, has fallen a victim to the requirements of military strategy, rather than to those of her own service for the compassing of strictly naval ends.

But, with all this admitted, it may be doubted whether the present situation demanded the retention of the battleship squadron in such close proximity to the beleaguered fortress, and whether the proceedings of a navy round a maritime fortress in the situation in which Port Arthur now finds itself may not rather better adapt themselves to the constantly changing conditions. Great battleships are built and intended to fight with their peers in blue water: they are not meant for in-shore duties, nor are they fitted to cope with the weapons of the fortress artilleryman or the submarine miner. The tremendous loss of naval capital, without any possible compensating gain, involved by the damage or destruction of a battleship under such conditions seems rather to point to the conclusion that sea-power is not intelligently translated by the use of first-class battleships in the immediate vicinity of a naval arsenal, when once the offensive power of the fortress has been stricken down. There are surely other means of mounting and using even 12-in. guns against the sea fronts, than by risking them upon platforms which have cost over a million sterling apiece, and it would rather appear that naval science has hitherto neglected, or relegated to a somewhat too subordinate rank of interest, the procedure which must always and inevitably follow close after the first clearance of the sea. Other ships, other weapons, and other methods appear then to become necessary, just as, upon the military side, field howitzers are excellent weapons, but no one would dream of employing them with a cavalry division.

If the torpedo boat and her elder sister the sea-going destroyer have replaced the fire-ship, and with a far more formidable weapon, the bombketch and kindred craft of the Great War, so frequently and generally so vainly demanded by Nelson and his captains, have not yet advanced a similar stage on the path of naval progress. Like the man-at-arms of the Middle Ages, a modern war fleet is never ready for the fray until it is armed at all points. Certainly, superiority upon the blue water is the essential thing, and we have been right, as this war has proved, to keep our eyes firmly fixed upon it; but the attack on a naval arsenal where the shattered remnant of a fleet has taken shelter has not been thoroughly thought out, and until it is, no navy can be certain of gathering the fruits of its earlier successes by its own unaided efforts, and these successes themselves may be endangered by the employment of weapons which may be invincible in their own sphere, but are the reverse in another.

As to the effect upon the course of the war of the loss of the *Hatsuse*, it may be calculated to embolden the Russians to act offensively with such ships as the *Baltic* can send to sea, and conversely to impel Japan to hasten the attack upon Port Arthur. It cannot, however, seriously alter the situation in the Far East, nor arrest in any way the close watch upon Port Arthur or the movements of transports. It is thus a misfortune for Japan, but a success without immediate advantage for Russia, and the chief lesson it conveys is a forcible reminder to those who are immersed in the critical operations on land, that this campaign, like every other waged by an insular state, begins, continues, and ends with the power of the Island Empire to preserve intact the command of the sea, and to maintain a sufficiently large margin of naval force to make this essential matter a reasonable certainty.

Meanwhile, His Imperial Majesty the Tsar of All the Russias has left his capital in order to inspect the reinforcements ordered to the Far East, and a

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convenient opportunity is offered for investigating the conditions under which these troops can reach the theatre of hostilities and be supplied when they arrive there.

In estimating the power Russia possesses to reinforce her troops in East Asia, we should certainly be inclined to accept in the main the assurances conveyed by Prince Khilkoff to the Tsar concerning the future possibilities of railway traffic. Even if the forecast made by the Minister of Ways and Communications is somewhat optimistic, it is certainly best for Japan to assume the *maximum* efficiency of the railway; anything short of this will be so much the more to her advantage and so much surplus in hand.

According to Prince Khilkoff, the average number of trains now running on the section west of Baikal, from Cheliabinsk to Irkutsk, is ten each way. These trains have not only to carry troops, stores, mails, supplies, and munitions of war, but also the material for the construction of the circum-Baikal railway, for fresh sidings to be made east of the lake, as well as provisions for the inhabitants along the line who "have been deprived of the first necessities of life owing to the cessation of ordinary traffic." It is hoped that by the present date eleven trains will run each way every twenty-four hours, and we will take the Minister's word for it that this anticipation has been realised.

Prince Khilkoff, however, confesses that up to the time of the recent thaw on Lake Baikal the Manchurian Railway has not been able to exceed the number of six trains a day; but during his stay in the East he was able to make such arrangements as might be expected to ensure the raising of this number to nine each way every twenty-four hours. This result he expected to secure by the construction of eleven fresh sidings, by the provision of a better supply of fuel, and by the transfer across the lake, effected during his visit, of 65 locomotives, 25 passenger coaches, and 2,013 goods vans and trucks. Now every traffic manager is aware

that on a single railway, given a fairly well-laid line, properly equipped, and sufficient rolling stock, the question of movement of trains depends upon the distance of the stations apart, or, failing stations, of the sidings. From Baikal to Kharbin alone it is, roughly, 1,200 miles, and with stations 25 miles apart, as they are, the addition of 11 supplementary sidings is utterly inadequate to make a radical change in the conditions of through traffic.

Of the nine trains Prince Khilkoff hopes to see proceeding eastward when all his improvements are effected, he proposes to allot six to military traffic, one to mails and passengers, and two to the transport of building materials, fuel, and articles of primary necessity for the inhabitants of the Trans-Baikal region. Thus the *maximum* number of six military trains will not as yet be exceeded.

As to the circum-Baikal railway, destined to complete the gap in the Russian line of communications, the summary of Prince Khilkoff's report sent by the Russian correspondents is less explicit; but in an interview with the correspondent of the *Matin* the Minister has expressed an opinion that this section "will not be open before the month of August." Important as this section will be, we can temporarily afford to neglect it, since it is evident that it will not be available for the purposes of the campaign during the present summer.

Until this line is open, all military and other traffic has to pass across the lake by boat. On the lake there are two steamers available, the *Baikal* and the *Angara*. The *Baikal* carries, on three pairs of rails laid along her axis on the main deck, 25 to 28 railway carriages with their loads at each trip, and at the speed of 7.5 knots makes the double journey five times in two days when the ice is completely dispersed. So long as the ice is even 3 ft. thick the time occupied by a single journey may be three days. Closely packed, the 25 carriages take 1,000 men, or 200 horses, while, on the upper decks

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and below, 2,000 more men can be penned in. The *Angara* can also carry 1,500 men, sardine fashion, on each journey, and is not adapted for carrying railway plant. Therefore, if it were merely a question of transferring a mob from one side of the lake to the other, the *maximum* carrying capacity would be 11,250 men a day.

According to our advices from Moscow, the re-opening of the steamer traffic was anticipated on May 8. Many people, basing their calculations upon the *maximum* capacity of steamers and trains, overstate the power of Russia to reinforce her army in the East. If we admit Prince Khilkoff's estimate of six military trains a day and allow these trains each 25 carriages holding 40 men apiece—although actually they are only taking 25 to 30—it is possibly true that 6,000 men might be passed along the line in a single day. But what may be possible, the utmost possible, for one day does not represent the average, and it is from their failure to take the whole situation into account that so many calculators have come to grief.

The Trans-Siberian and its continuation in Manchuria is practically the sole line of communications, not only for the army, but also for the navy and the civil population throughout Russian East Asia, since the assistance which will be afforded by the waterways of the Volga, Amur, Sungari, and other rivers hardly promises much relief, and will come to an end in the early autumn with the return of the frost.

We have frequently mentioned that the transport of army stores and supplies, together with that of construction material and supplies for the local population, must necessarily absorb much of the traffic. Prince Khilkoff shows that between January 25 and March 12, a period of 47 days, the eastward traffic amounted to 425 tons of stores a day, or, at the rate of nine tons per waggon, about 47 waggons or nearly two trains a day, but in practice probably rather more. This too, at a moment when everything except the

essential was put on one side for the sake of the rapid despatch of urgently needed reinforcements.

Now that the Japanese are penetrating into Manchuria, there is a visible unrest spreading among the native population, and attacks by brigands are recorded on a *crescendo* scale even within a few miles of Liauyang, hitherto the centre of the Russian position. The military danger is indeed very slight, but, so long as these attacks continue, the immense length of railway must be closely guarded and the field army proportionately reduced.

Meanwhile the 4th Siberian Army Corps is straggling all over the line of communications, and no one can say when the railway will be clear. The block caused by all these heavy liabilities has certainly been great, and a vivid light is thrown upon the situation west of Baikal in mid-April by a correspondent of the *Viedomosti* proceeding eastward, who declares that "all the stations are crowded with goods vans and piled up with goods; it is said that 1,000 goods vans have been blocked." This is confirmed by a correspondent of the *Novoe Vremya*, who declares that the railway stations are not suitable for movements on a large scale. He says that the condition of the stupidly named station of "Manchuria," the chief centre of the Eastern Chinese Railway, is simply indescribable, and he adds that the officials are run off their feet and have become almost hysterical; collisions with the public, he adds, occur daily.

Thus, while all our attention is naturally riveted upon the feats of arms at the front, the pulse of the future campaign is best felt far in rear of the contending armies, and it is certainly a moderate statement to affirm that the situation on the Russian side is one to cause much anxiety.

Meanwhile Japan, so long as she retains the command at sea, is practically at home at the seat of war. From the rich stores of her abundant population she retains the power of continuously placing two or more

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men in the field for every one that Russia brings up. She can regulate her action by that of her enemy, and always anticipate it, since she can throw troops into Manchuria with greater facility, greater speed, and in more efficient condition. The final success of Russia in this campaign is not, therefore, as yet within sight.

Whether the Japanese have decided to invest, besiege, or bombard and assault Port Arthur we are still without means of knowing. We can, of course, sum up the political and military reasons for and against one course or another, but as such procedure does not necessarily conduce to the divination of Japanese intentions it is best left alone.

But the idea that Japan has to choose between the two objectives—Kuropatkin's army and Port Arthur—is very wide of the mark. Japan possesses ample resources for carrying on the two operations concurrently if she be so minded, and it may safely be added that the correlation of the temporary halt of the First Army and the recent naval misfortunes is purely accidental.

As to the Third Army of Japan, its place is marked, by German critics, on the left of the line, and, though the advices from the Kaiping side are extremely conflicting and incomplete, an advance from this quarter is a movement the Russians appear to expect. The large fleet of transports which carried the Second Army began to speed back to Japan on May 5, and we should naturally anticipate its return with fresh troops a fortnight or three weeks later. It is therefore no matter for surprise that the correspondent of an enterprising paper, while returning to Japan, should have found the Yellow Sea covered with Japanese transports, proceeding fearlessly and without naval escort to their destination. That fact hardly denotes that the Japanese Staff has become afflicted with the nervous disorder which seems to have prostrated some European observers after the loss of the *Hatsuse*.

There is in fact not the shadow of a sign that the military operations of our allies are not proceeding with

all possible security and despatch. It is not their business to assail Kuropatkin until they can make sure of their stroke, and the assembly of 200,000 men or more, together with the organisation of their transport and supply from a sea base in a foreign country, is a work of time.

It is true that General Kuroki's army has offered itself a willing victim to General Kuropatkin's blows for the past three weeks and that it stands at Fenghwangchenn, apparently isolated and forlorn, its actions "betraying indecision," according to the not too intelligent appreciation of General Pflug. But it is nearly as numerous as any army Kuropatkin can send against it, and nothing would better suit the Japanese plans than that the Russian general should commit himself to an attack of their positions so far from Liauyang. They have done their best to induce the Russians to attack by means of reconnaissances in force nearly up to the Motienling; but the Russians are not to be drawn, ready as they must be to make a violent attack upon the first Japanese column that gives them an opening.

"In battle," declare the Russian instructions recently issued, "the best means of beating the enemy is by attacking him; in consequence, the rule of acting offensively must be taken as the guiding principle in each encounter." Admirable theory! and hitherto admirably followed—by the Japanese. Whatever chance Kuropatkin may have had of engaging the First Army on fairly level terms, numerically considered, or even with very superior numbers had he not bottled up nearly 50,000 good troops in his maritime army traps, the situation changes with the gradual alignment of other forces in support of the First Army. The Russians then become more and more confined to their fortified positions facing south and east, from Kaiping to the Motienling; and, in view of the superiority of the Japanese numbers and the prudence with which they have hitherto been directed, a successful counter-attack, ardently as it must be desired, is not easy to compass.

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Partly owing to the vigour and far-reaching scouting of Mishchenko's Cossacks, who have done well despite some occasional reverses incidental to enterprises of this character, and partly owing to the somewhat premature and excessive divulgations of the world's press, we must conclude that the net is vainly spread in the sight of the bird, and that forewarned is forearmed. If the Russians have not fathomed the general lines of their enemy's strategy they are very dull people, and if they are caught in the meshes of the net they have no one but themselves to blame.

Whatever course Kuropatkin may adopt can make little difference to the Japanese plans, which aim at crushing their enemy out of Southern Manchuria by weight of numbers prudently directed. The greater the strength of the Army of Manchuria and the longer its resistance, the greater will be the numbers of the Japanese and the more decisive their success if victory inclines to their arms. The more Russians immured at Port Arthur and Vladivostok, or wasted in futile ramblings in North-Eastern Korea, the greater the certainty of a Japanese success ; and if General Kuropatkin chooses to fight the decisive battle of this campaign within easy reach of the bases of the Japanese on the sea, it is not for the latter to deprive him of the satisfaction.

We may, and indeed we must, acknowledge the difficulties of Kuropatkin's position, and admit that, even if the Russian army fails to hold its position during the forthcoming operations, the blame for failure will not rest upon the soldiers of the Tsar.

Given the deplorable conditions under which Russian diplomacy prepared the ground for its armies, Russian success in this first campaign was only possible with unusual luck, better leading, and proof given of manifest superiority of the Russian soldier over the Japanese. Luck has been fairly balanced, and the loss of the *Bogatyr* at Vladivostok, at last admitted, shows that the fickle goddess is at least impartial. Leading, on

the Russian side, has hitherto been beneath contempt. As to the superiority of the Russian soldier over the Japanese, we are justified in saying that it remains to be proved, fine as the conduct of the Russian troops has been in circumstances of great difficulty largely due to inferior leadership.

The Russian military magazine, the *Voiennyi Sbornik*, after some chivalrous compliments to the foe, takes refuge in the belief that the Japanese are wanting in the faculty of combination, and complains of their intellectual heaviness. These faults are not apparent to us, and the *Sbornik* rather appears to neglect that ancient adage which recommends that one should not talk of the devil in the dark.

CHAPTER XX¹

THE BATTLE OF KINCHOU

A RIGHT gallant victory has rewarded the formidable and disciplined valour of the Mikado's army, and splendidly have the Japanese troops maintained the untarnished renown of their flag.

It will be recalled that the Second Japanese Army, under General Oku, landed at Pitszewo on May 5 and following days, and that during the subsequent operations up to the 15th they drove away the Russian detachments in the vicinity and secured the control of the railway to Port Arthur. On the 16th, having assembled at least two divisions in front of the enemy, the Japanese commander attacked the Russian advanced troops occupying the high ground east of Kinchou and drove them from the field after a sharp engagement.

These affairs were the prologue to the Port Arthur drama, of which we have now witnessed the first act.

The Second Army includes the 1st, 3rd, and 4th Divisions. These troops began on the 21st to prepare the attack upon Kinchou and the narrow neck of land to the south of that town which connects the Kwantung promontory with the mainland. This neck, the scene of the battle of May 26, is a mile and three-quarters broad between Kinchou Bay on the north-west and Hand Bay on the south-east. The ground near the sea on each side is low, but along the centre of the neck there rises a ridge of higher ground, with a general

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of May 30, June 4 and 19, 1904.

bearing north-east and south-west, the culminating point being 350 ft. above the sea and south-east of the village of Suchiatun. This culminating point is the Nanshan of the official accounts, and so long as it remained in Russian hands all access to the Kwantung Peninsula by land was forbidden.

There remained, it is true, the alternative of a Japanese descent in rear of the defenders, but it is probable that the hydrographic conditions—that is to say, shoal water combined with the difference of depths at various hours of the day—may have rendered such attack too dangerous to attempt. The Japanese have hitherto displayed a marked disinclination to undertake landings likely to be opposed, and, in view of the hydrographic conditions and the large numbers of the Port Arthur garrison, we cannot, without further inquiry, venture to find any fault with the decision.

On the south-western, or Russian, side of the neck another line of hills runs from the Liushutun promontory facing Talienswan Bay, nearly north-west to the shores of Kinchou Bay. This line is six miles in length, and its extent may have caused it to appear less suitable than the Nanshan position for defence by the numbers which could be spared from the Port Arthur garrison. It may be remarked that the Russian regulations of 1901, now in force, allow only a mile and a quarter of front for a division in line of battle, and that to officers brought up in these ideas the tendency to mass troops on a restricted front must have been the natural course their previous training would have prompted. Nevertheless, although the longer line in rear was abandoned in favour of the narrower position in front, certain points of it were held in support. There was a heavy battery of eight guns on the extremity of the Liushutun promontory firing to seaward, and it is possible that there were one or two other works in the second line.

General Stössel was in supreme command of the Russian force, and, in the light of official reports from Japan, it would appear that the main body of the troops

consisted of General Fock's 4th East Siberian Rifle Division. It was this unit which was engaged in the fight of the 16th, and it seems likely that the 4th Division was allotted to General Stössel for the express purpose of holding the Kinchou position to the last extremity.

So long as this neck was in Russian hands not only was the road to Port Arthur absolutely barred, but a sally-port also remained open through which General Stössel might hope to march in order to co-operate with the expected, or at all events promised, advance of the army of succour from the north. Although the defenders may have been rather too thick on the ground, the Nanshan position offered unusual advantages for defence, and had been diligently prepared for permanent occupation for many weeks past. We read of ten forts of a semi-permanent character, and from the list of their armament it is clear that on this occasion the Russian artillery must have been vastly superior, both in calibre and in range, to the Japanese guns. Forts, trenches, and rifle pits, covered by mines and wire entanglements, were constructed on every point of vantage, and in several tiers. Searchlights were also employed, and every advantage was taken of the proximity of a great fortress and its ample plant. There can be no doubt whatever that the Russians meant to stand here to the last, and that not even the possibility of defeat was entertained.

Thanks to the battery on Liushutun, the entry of Japanese gunboats into the shallow waters of Hand Bay, which wash the south-eastern shores of the neck, was rendered impracticable, and it was therefore possible for a Russian gunboat to remain in this bay in a position of relative and temporary security, and to take an effective part in the subsequent fighting. It is true that on the left flank of the position Kinchou Bay lay open to the enterprise of the Japanese navy, but on this side the shoal water forbids approach save by small gunboats of light draught, and against these the heavy batteries

of the Russians in their dominating sites must have appeared to offer ample security.

On the side of the mainland there was, indeed, one element of disadvantage. Four miles east of Nanshan, Mount Sampson, or Tahoshangshan, rises to a height of over 2,200 ft. above the sea, and on its western slopes batteries might in course of time have been constructed to overpower the guns of the defence. Mount Sampson entirely overlooks and commands the Russian position, and we may feel positive that the Japanese commander selected a position on this mountain as his post of observation during the battle, and that his field artillery was, in this part of the field, probably obtaining the advantage of command over the sites occupied by the Russian guns.

But with this exception the Russian position had everything in its favour. It was short and strongly fortified; its flanks were apparently secure, and it was held by a garrison more than ample for its defence. If a Russian division of 8,000 to 12,000 men, backed up by 50 or more siege and 16 quick-firing field guns, cannot hold 3,000 yards of front, strongly intrenched, and with its flanks resting on the sea, against the rush of infantry in the open and restricted to a frontal assault, it is hard to say what position it can ever expect to defend with success.

When the Japanese army came over against this formidable obstacle, it is small wonder that its commander hesitated to commit his men to the tremendous risks of an open assault, or that he should have spent several days in reconnoitring the Russian dispositions. The manner in which this reconnaissance was effected will repay study, and displays the science and intelligence of the Japanese army at their best. During this period the army effected its march of approach and crouched ready for its spring in the hollows to the north of the bold ridge which runs down from the summit of Mount Sampson to the Nanshan position. The Russians meanwhile still occupied the town of Kinchou for some reason

not easy to determine, and the first operation required was their eviction from a position which they had no sort of business to hold. This was the work of Wednesday, the 25th, and it was accomplished without difficulty, while the enemy's artillery at Nanshan was simultaneously engaged to divert their attention.

The loss of Kinchou town affected in no way the security of the Russian position, and advanced but little the cause of the Japanese. The main struggle was still to come, and the decision of the commander was still to be made. If he decided to await the arrival of heavier metal, it might be days or weeks before it could appear, and meanwhile the summer was drawing on, and within five or six weeks the rains would be due. If, on the other hand, he attacked and failed, there would equally be delay, aggravated by the loss of several thousand men. No one who has felt the overwhelming responsibilities of command at such a moment can fail to recognise and admire the splendid audacity which decided to throw at once for the whole stake.

On Wednesday evening the gunboats *Tsukushi*, *Saiyen*, *Akagi*, and *Chiokai*, with the first torpedo flotilla, reached Kinchou Bay. Of these the *Saiyen* is the old Chinese *Tsiyuen*, of 2,264 tons, carrying one 6-in. and two 8-in. guns. She was built at Stettin, and is a veteran campaigner of the Sino-Japanese war. The *Tsukushi* is an old Elswick boat of 1,370 tons, with two 10-in. Krupps and four 40-pounders. The *Akagi* is of 600 tons, and has four 4·7 guns; while, lastly, the *Chiokai* is of the same tonnage, and carries one 8-in. gun and one 4·7. Thus fifteen guns of medium calibre were available to meet the fifty Russian siege guns, and, thanks to the mobility of the gunboats, the Japanese ordnance, especially that on board the two smaller ships, could be employed in the most effective manner to flank the general advance and cover its front.

At dawn on Thursday, May 26, the attack began. The gunboats stood in and bombarded Suchiatun and

the forts beyond, the *Akagi* and *Chiokai* going close inshore and maintaining their fire throughout the day in a very gallant manner, thus contributing largely to the success of the day.

Meantime the army was early afoot, and opened the fight at 2.35 a.m. By 5.20 a.m. Kinchou was traversed by the Japanese right, and the troops then advanced, on as broad a front as the ground allowed, covered by the flanking fire of the gunboats and by the field guns on the ridges of Mount Sampson. The 3rd Division stood on the left, the 1st Division in the centre, and the 4th on the right. The incidents of the infantry fight are at present obscure, but by 11 a.m., after a hot artillery duel, the principal batteries of the Russians were silenced. The defenders, however, still held out in their covered trenches, while the assailants, close as they might approach, could not penetrate the material obstacles accumulated in front of the works or subdue the rifle fire from the loopholes of the enemy. On the left flank of the Japanese the Russian gunboat also played a useful part in checking the infantry attack, but a Russian attempt to land troops from five transports on the east side of Hand Bay, in order to take the Japanese in flank, was frustrated by a Japanese counter-move.

The Japanese then began a fresh bombardment with the whole of their artillery. Under this storm of fire the Russians began to give way, and towards 7 p.m., after sixteen hours' incessant fighting, the Japanese infantry of the 4th Division, wading through the shoal water on the left of the Russian line, penetrated into the works, and, followed by the other divisions, gradually secured the mastery of the entire position. Over 700 Russian dead, with sixty-eight cannon of all calibres and ten machine-guns as trophies of the victor, proclaimed at once the stubbornness of the Russian defence and the completeness of the Japanese victory.

Such great success could not have been obtained without heavy sacrifice, and it is no matter for surprise

that the Japanese casualties amounted to 4,192 men. To judge by the number of Russian dead, 704 of whom were buried by the Japanese, the casualties on the Russian side were probably over 2,000, and the attack on Port Arthur will therefore begin with some 1,500 wounded encumbering the hospitals of the Russian fortress from this battlefield alone.

Despite the heavy strain of a long day's fighting, the Japanese took up the pursuit early on Friday, and occupied Nankwanling in the course of the morning. From this point the retreating Russians were driven towards Port Arthur and pursued through Nanshan-shilipu, a station on the branch line to Dalny, eight miles south-west of Nanshan. The victory was costly but complete, and the defeat as crushing as unexpected.

It is true that Nanshan is not Port Arthur, but the magnificent qualities of pluck and endurance displayed by the Japanese in this battle and the incomparably more favourable conditions under which the attack upon Port Arthur can now take place must cause home-staying Russians to tremble for the safety of their fortress and their fleet.

Kinchou must rank as the proudest title of nobility as yet won on the field of battle by the valour of Japanese arms. There is no escape from either its meaning or its consequences. With almost everything in its favour, a strong, fresh, and confident Russian army, solidly intrenched behind almost inaccessible fortifications and supported by a formidable and superior artillery, has in a single day been fairly swept out of its trenches like dust before a broom. Never, surely, has the Russian army been treated with such scant respect; never has the military prestige of a proud empire received a ruder shock. Nor must we forget to note and extol the admirable co-operation of the sister services of Japan, which on this occasion, as on the Yalu and elsewhere, rendered each other such ungrudging and effective aid. We may search in vain through the history of war for an army and navy which

have both been brought simultaneously to such a high and equal standard of military excellence.

Dalny passed into Japanese hands without opposition on the 30th, and with it 290 railway waggons, which will prove of use during the forthcoming operations. The chief importance of the occupation of Dalny lies in the fact that it provides an ice-free port for the Japanese during the operations of next winter, whether Port Arthur stands or falls. Neither Niuchwang nor Antung have similar advantages, and much inconvenience and delay might have arisen had not Dalny fallen so opportunely into the hands of the Mikado's troops in an almost uninjured state. As a local base for the prosecution of the attack on Port Arthur it is also invaluable, though it can scarcely be reckoned as entirely secure for naval purposes while a Russian ship remains afloat at Port Arthur and is capable of putting to sea. The presence at Dalny of such a large stock of railway material affords ample proof, if proof were needed, of the Russian disbelief in the capture of the Nanshan lines by the Japanese; otherwise the rolling stock would certainly have been withdrawn to Port Arthur.

The *Kreuz Zeitung* seizes the occasion to dilate upon this battle as a proof of the correctness of German theories respecting frontal attacks in general, and stirs up old animosities that were better buried by invidious references to South Africa. Need the *Kreuz Zeitung* have gone quite so far afield?

The truth is that all armies would be glad to see their troops, and especially their generals, inoculated with the resolution and intelligence which have proved the rule in the Japanese operations, and we must all allow that the Mikado's soldiers have succeeded, in circumstances of exceptional disadvantage, in a task that has rarely been carried to a successful issue by any army in modern times. But, so far as regards Kinchou, the frontal attack would appear to have failed, as that of the Germans failed at Gravelotte,

and in each case it was the flank attack—by the 4th Division on May 26 and by the Saxons in 1870—that decided the day. We find, in short, the old lesson of 1870 repeated—the front is difficult, try the flanks. South Africa taught us a similar lesson.

When we have hundreds of thousands of men at our disposal under a system of universal service we can afford to pile on men regardless of losses. Germany is doubtless in such a position, but we are not, and what may be necessary and advisable in the one case is not necessarily so in the other. No German has taken part in serious war for the last thirty-three years, and the writings of Germans of the younger generation are those of men entirely devoid of practical knowledge of war. We are therefore compelled to regard them with an exceedingly open mind, and to prefer the lessons of our considerable experience during the past quarter of a century.

The Japanese army can now continue its advance upon Port Arthur without fear of serious resistance, and complete the close investment of that place on the land side. The landing of heavy guns at Dalny, their transport to the chosen positions, and their erection in battery on elevated sites will be an operation requiring time, and it is only when this work is done that naval aid will be once more invited, and that Port Arthur will again become a *nid à bombes*. The Russians already have cause to know that the 12-in. guns of the Japanese navy can rake the fortress from end to end. When to this tempest of fire is added the steady bombardment by the land batteries of the attack, Port Arthur will have to look to its laurels, and the situation of the relics of the naval squadron will be most indifferent.

If the Japanese had only desired to seal up Port Arthur on the land side, Kinchou would never have been fought, since defences could have been constructed on Mount Sampson and the heights around Kinchou which could have prevented the defenders of Kwantung

from breaking out, save with very heavy loss. The great feat of arms of Kinchou implies other designs, and bodes ill for the defenders of Port Arthur.

It is not surprising that the news of this defeat, worse than a disaster, reaching St. Petersburg as it did upon the anniversary of the Tsar's coronation, should have caused profound dejection in the Russian capital. Bad policy makes bad war, and the diplomacy which prepares for its country this cup of humiliation must see it drained to the dregs.

Whether this blow will cause any alteration in General Kuropatkin's plans is now the centre of all interest. In view of the elaborate preparation of the battlefield, it must be presumed that Kuropatkin was not unaware of the intention to fight at Kinchou, and this second isolation and second defeat of a fraction of his army will require a good deal of explanation. Will he remain stolidly in position, "in an attitude of calm," as a French correspondent in his camp has elegantly defined it, or will he take heart of grace and on Japanese heads "tell his devotion with revengeful arms"? That is for the future to say, but it is manifest that in an army none too large at the outset there must be some finality reached at last in the process of annihilation of divisions one by one.

If Kuropatkin had marched proudly away with the army numerically unworthy of the "dignity and might of Russia" before battle was ever joined, he could have done so with graceful dignity. After two bloody defeats, 106 guns lost, the best part of three divisions handsomely beaten with the loss of 5,000 killed and wounded, and Port Arthur on the eve of a struggle for life and death, retirement is still indeed possible, but the grace and dignity attaching to the movement will no longer remain its distinguishing characteristic.

General Stössel at Port Arthur appears to have a larger force than that with which he has been commonly credited in some quarters, since, unless some units have become detached from the regiments under his

command, he should have 33 battalions at his disposal. Including fortress artillery, engineers, and special corps, and allowing for sick and for a loss of 2,000 men at Kinchou, there should be 28,000 men of the land army at Port Arthur and 10,000 sailors, or a combatant strength of 38,000 men, with some 56 field and 400 siege guns, besides naval ordnance.

Although traffic across Baikal recommenced during the first week in May, the conditions of transport across the lake will have been unfavourable until the ice entirely disappeared from the banks. Even then there are great arrears to be made up, and a vast undigested mass of goods and stores to be passed through before the line can be cleared for troop trains. The staff officers engaged in drawing up graphics for the railway transport to the East deserve our commiseration, and it is highly probable that they have been compelled to readjust their ideas once a week. What is simple as a Staff College exercise and as theory becomes very much the reverse when the notorious failings of Russian administration begin to exert their malign and unhappy influence upon a problem demanding the highest sense of duty and unimpeachable probity in all concerned from top to bottom of the hierarchy.

The first serious reinforcements which Kuropatkin can receive from the West will be the mobilised troops of the 10th and 17th Army Corps, destined to join their brigades already in the East. The order of mobilisation of the 17th Corps was issued on May 8, and on the 25th the corps commander reported by telegraph to St. Petersburg that the troops had completed their mobilisation within the allotted periods, presumably seventeen days. The corps includes the 3rd and 35th Infantry Divisions, each with their artillery brigade of six batteries and flying park, bearing numbers corresponding to those of the divisions. Besides infantry and artillery, the 2nd independent cavalry brigade, consisting of the 51st and 52nd Dragoons, accompanies the corps, representing the only regular cavalry hitherto

despatched from the West. Finally, there is also the 17th Battalion of Engineers, part of the 6th Engineer Field Park, and the transport of the army corps. Excluding the brigade of this corps already in the East, the combatants to be despatched should number 29,000 rifles and 1,800 sabres, or 30,800 in all. Nothing has transpired to show that transport eastward has yet begun, but, if we allow that the movement of one corps or the other may have commenced on June 1, the first troops can only be expected to reach Mukden during the second week in July, and, if the railway is kept reasonably clear, the whole of the 30,000 men may reach Kuropatkin before the end of the month. The exact dates cannot be fixed without knowledge of the amount of transport allotted to the various units.

General Slutchevsky, commanding the 10th Corps, quitted Kharkoff on June 11 ; the departure of General Bilderling, commanding the 17th Corps, was notified on the 16th. It seems, therefore, probable that the 10th Corps will be first in the field, and its effectives will be the same as those of the 17th Corps, less the cavalry. The question then arises whether the addition of these two corps to the field army by the middle of August—which may be materially practicable, thanks to the reduction of effectives below the normal standard, the cutting down of transport, and the elimination of all mounted troops except two regiments—will seriously alter the balance of advantage. In view of the character of the operations, these reinforcements seemed destined to do little more than make good the waste of six months of war, and even their transport to the theatre of hostilities offers no serious hope of permitting the Russian commander to engage his enemy on favourable terms.

The present intentions of the Russian General Staff are believed to include the despatch eastward of 162,000 men and 83,300 tons of stores during the six months May to October. This gives a monthly supply of 27,000 men and 13,883 tons.

Since this Russian estimate was made it has, however, been discovered that the question of remounts presents unexpected difficulties, and that the local supply in East Asia is both inadequate and unsuitable for the needs of the army. It is certainly curious that a fact so well known to observers in the West should have remained a secret to the army most concerned; but the result will be another modification of those ill-fated graphics and a reduction either in men or supplies in order to secure the proper provision of horses.

This revision should bring the Russian estimates into reasonable accord with our anticipations. Briefly stated, the situation is that Kuropatkin can count at this moment upon a field army of 100,000 combatants, and that he can hope, if all goes well with the Trans-Siberian, to receive a monthly addition to his fighting strength of about 27,000 men.

The *Novoe Vremya*, in the earlier days of the war, described the campaign as "a simple expedition." Anything less expeditious than the Russian arrangements would be hard to name; as to the simplicity, there is certainly a strong infusion of that quality in the Slav character, but there is none at all in the desperately intricate problem of logistics which still confronts the Russian Staff and is still unsolved.

It now becomes necessary to refer briefly to the military conditions of the country which is about to become the scene of pending military operations.

The valleys of the Liau and the Yalu are separated by the great backbone ridge of mountains, known by a variety of names, which stretch from near Kaiping to the neighbourhood of Vladivostok, the highest points within the area of the present operations not exceeding 4,000 ft.

Just as in the Alps we find short valleys and abrupt descents on the side of Italy, and easier gradients, with long and divergent valleys, on that of France, so in these Manchurian mountains, although the distinction

is much less marked, the northern slopes are steeper than the southern, and often fall in precipitous descents. These hills are for the most part wooded, the forest zone extending from near Kaiping all along the watershed to the Long White Mountain and North-Eastern Korea. The southern slopes are more cultivated than those on the north, and are covered with the débris of disintegrated granite rocks, mica and schist, washed down into the valleys by the rains.

The woods vary in character in different localities. In some places the local woodmen and charcoal burners have made clearings; in others the trees and undergrowth have been uncut for years. Each local community acts according to its pleasure. Thus in one district may be found wide expanses covered with growth no higher than the knees, in another trees 30 ft. high—oak, plane, maple, elm, birch, walnut, hazel, with an undergrowth of tree-shrubs, creepers, brambles, ferns or bracken, and wild raspberries, the whole forming a dense and almost impenetrable thicket on each side of the narrow track.

East of Kaiping are high rugged hills, with valleys partially cultivated, extending for some ten miles; then comes the wooded district, with clearings and cultivated patches appearing here and there. Twenty miles south of Kaiping and the same distance from the coast the hills rise in steep and jagged peaks, with many cliffs, the whole densely wooded.

When we speak of roads in Manchuria we speak of things that scarcely exist. Apart from the mountain districts, the roads in Southern Manchuria have the peculiarity of being below the level of the adjoining and cultivated land. The reason for this is that the cultivators annually steal thousands of cartloads of soil from the roads in order to mix it with the farmyard manure; and they especially favour the mud-holes in the roads, which offer a richer soil. In consequence the tracks in the low-lying districts go from bad to worse, until they become mere stretches of stagnant water, and fresh

tracks are then made across the fields, becoming roads in their turn. As there are no divisions between properties, carts travel freely over the fields when they are hard frozen in winter; but in spring there is endless friction between farmers and carters when the latter attempt to traverse the newly-sown fields to avoid the mud-holes.

From the middle of June until the middle of July all waggon traffic ceases on the roads in the low districts, and only the smaller and lighter carts can travel at all. For a varying period after the middle of July all considerable traffic stops on these roads, which then become almost impassable for wheeled vehicles. Movement is then mainly confined to the passage of light carts and pack animals along the mountain tracks, and this continues until some time after the close of the rainy season, the duration of which is subject to considerable variation.

Even in the mountain districts the best of the cart tracks are not good, and in many places two carts cannot pass each other. The best of the mountain tracks at the disposal of the Japanese is that leading from Antung, through Siuyen, and over the Tapienling (Great Level Pass), which crosses the hills where they are low, more open, and less wooded; the gradients on this road are easy, and should permit the train and artillery of a Japanese army to pass.

The Liau plain and some of the richer valleys near Liauyang and Haicheng have large areas covered with the most characteristic crop of the country—namely, kaoliang (tall grain), or sorghum. This crop is planted in drills 2 ft. apart, each plant being from a foot to 18 in. from the next. It has the appearance of maize, and the crop is earthed up like an English potato-field. At the present season it may be 3 ft. high, but once the rains begin in earnest, the kaoliang grows rapidly, and shoots up to 12 ft. or 15 ft. in height, completely covering even mounted troops from view, and resembling a sugar plantation. When this moment comes the Chinese

footpad is in season, and so perfect is the cover that the local authorities make no attempt to effect arrests until after the harvest. So difficult did the Russians find movement amidst this crop in 1900 that they made no attempt to move beyond Tashihchiao and to restore their damaged railway until well on in September, and for two years after the Boxer troubles the crop was not allowed within 600 yards of the line.

When fully grown the stems of the kaoliang are rough and impede movement; the ground is usually wet and soft; as the crop covers three-fourths of the Liao Valley, it renders all movements of troops, except infantry in open order, next to impracticable for two months. The chief of the other crops in Southern Manchuria are the small yellow millet, the stalks of which make capital fodder for horses, dwarf beans, and a grass resembling small millet with white grains. In the Siuyen Valley only a little kaoliang is grown in patches, but there are maize, cotton, small millet, and beans.

Siuyen is an ideal assembly ground for a large army in the mountains. It stands in a high and healthy open valley, fifteen miles by ten, with dry, porous soil, and it is traversed by three pure water streams. From the south it can be reached by three rough but fairly good cart tracks, passable in all seasons, leading from Pitszewo, Tachuangho, and Takushan. These tracks are bordered by steep hills, rising sharply from the valleys and covered with brushwood and coarse grass. From Siuyen roads radiate in all directions, and even if circumstances compelled an army to remain in this valley during the rains, its situation would be infinitely preferable to that of another in the Liao Valley, exposed to the dreaded summer diseases of July, which may take a heavy toll of the Russian army. The Siuyen-Haicheng road is well cultivated, save here and there a sandy waste, and the side valleys on each side of the road are not without a fair proportion of crops.

It will be seen from the above details, and from

a glance at a map of the theatre of war, that the Russian position between Kaiping and Haicheng can be eventually attacked along its front across ground peculiarly adapted to light infantry, backed up by mountain artillery, supplied by a semi-military coolie corps, and directed by a highly-trained staff thoroughly conversant with the ground.

The advantages of the Russian position—namely, good parallel communications along its front by road and rail, with power of concentrating against a separated column of the enemy—are more apparent than real. Considerable movements by rail cannot be effected at the last moment on a battlefield, and, from what has been already said about the roads, it will be seen that the low country communications are most indifferent at this season, and will tend to become worse every day.

When the Japanese reach Kaiping, they will already have turned the mountain barrier, and the Motien position may eventually fall without being attacked.

CHAPTER XXI¹

THE TRIBULATIONS OF A GENERAL

WHATEVER views we may entertain concerning the policy of Russia in the Far East, we must all be prepared to allow that the task which now lies before the Russian General-in-Chief is one of extraordinary difficulty.

What was apparent to impartial foreign observers before the outbreak of war must now have begun to dawn upon the Russian people—namely, that a solution of the military problem in conformity with the views and aspirations of the Russian Government can only be anticipated, after a long delay, if at all, by the display of genius in the command, of superior valour and intelligence in the rank and file, and of almost inexhaustible patience and loyalty in the mass of the people.

It is certainly not the business of Anglo-Saxon critics to offer advice or suggestions, which would be very ill received, to the Russian people or Russian commanders; but it is a military interest to examine the difficulties under which the command of the Russian army labours, so that we may be able hereafter to judge the procedure adopted during the progress of this eventful campaign. As an example of the weighty anxieties which beset a commander in time of war, and of the imperious need for the existence of military talent of the highest order in a directing staff, the

¹ From *The Times* of June 23, 1904.

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position of affairs at this moment offers quite exceptional and unusual interest.

General Kuropatkin assumed the command with a large balance of public confidence in his favour. He was trusted, and is trusted still, by the Tsar, the army, and the nation, and those organs of Russian thought which are continually preaching the necessity for a steady continuance of this confidence, despite recent disasters, are thoroughly justified in the line they have adopted. A commander in the field must be trusted all in all, or not at all.

If Russia suffers now, as she has generally suffered in the past, from the absence of any commanding personality in the realms of politics or war, it must also be allowed that Kuropatkin was designated for the command by the almost universal consensus of public opinion. The glamour of Skobelev's achievements invests his trusted lieutenant with a ray of reflected glory, not without a practical measure of value at a moment when decisions may have to be imposed which cannot be pleasing to those under his command.

The years spent at the War Office also authorise Kuropatkin to count with confidence upon the devotion of the military administration at the Russian capital, in itself a valuable aid to a general in the field. These advantages, the sturdy valour of that really fine fellow the Russian private, and, at present, the patient patriotism of the Russian people, represent the credit side of Kuropatkin's balance, and if there were no other side to the account he would indeed be a fortunate man. But at the apex of the autocratic pyramid there stands the Tsar, able day by day and almost hour by hour to offer advice and make suggestions not always readily distinguishable from commands. The telegraph, that useful handmaid, but most exacting mistress, brings all the hopes, fears, influences, and agitations of the Court into the camp. His Imperial Majesty has begun to discover that his own political credit is irretrievably involved in the bankruptcy which threatens the Far

Eastern affairs of his great Empire. That is the inevitable result of a political system which makes the Crown the recognised fount of all mundane good and the accredited source of all evil that befalls the state. Uneasy lies the head that both reigns and governs.

With the growing intelligence and increasing means of expression of Russian public opinion, it is no longer left for the foreign intellectuals to point the moral. A recent article in the Moscow *Kreml* by Professor Ilovaisky accuses in set terms Prince Lobanoff, Count Muravieff, and M. Witte as the authors of all the political disasters in the Far East. Each one of these dignitaries has been the trusted councillor and mouthpiece of the Tsar, and by attacking them the Professor indirectly assails autocracy itself and all that it implies.

Human nature being inseparable even from the august person of a Tsar, abstention from interference in the conduct of the war is more than we can have any reason to expect from a ruler whose own credit is so closely bound up in what he has himself described as the "great historic task" of consolidating Russian rule on the Pacific coast. Below his Imperial Majesty stands the ill-starred figure of the Viceroy-Admiral, largely responsible for the first disasters, and retained in his appointment from motives we can rather understand than respect, though damaged in repute and deprived of all powers of military command.

Admiral Alexeieff has not been content to sink into the position of respectable insignificance obviously, but half-heartedly, assigned to him by the Imperial telegram announcing the appointments of Makharoff and Kuropatkin. He continues to send to the Tsar, through General Pflug, the Quartermaster-General of his field staff—a staff without an army—his own summary of, and comments upon, the military situation. He and his considerable following are not overflowing with sympathy for Kuropatkin and the large staff he has brought with him from the West. The point of

view of the two men is not the same; the difference is profound, and the effect is likely to be disastrous.

Admiral Alexeieff is still responsible for the civil government of the Imperial Lieutenancy in the Far East. On these grounds he is naturally averse to the abandonment of territory over which he has hitherto exercised the pleasures of unquestioned sway. As a sailor he is also opposed to any action tending to cause loss of touch with the relics of the great squadron which fate, in the guise of incapable diplomacy, has consigned to the prison-fortresses of the Pacific.

He dreads the effect upon the native population and upon the surrounding peoples of the abandonment of Southern Manchuria. He knows that Port Arthur and Vladivostok contain not only the best of the Russian ships, but some 15,000 of the smartest officers and seamen in the navy, together with a large number of the most capable mechanics, who can ill be spared. He is aware that his own reputation can never survive the deadly blow which will be dealt it by the capture of Port Arthur.

To what extent the defeats of the Yalu and Kinchou have been due to these terrors which have haunted the Viceregal mind we have no present means of ascertaining, but the chances are that both were largely caused by weak concessions to ideas which Kuropatkin himself can hardly have been expected to share. The particular difficulty which confronts the Russian general in relation to these matters is that the Viceroy's fears are largely justified, and that the only point of difference between the two men lies in the selection of the best course to pursue.

No one can doubt that the appearance of the Japanese at Mukden and round Port Arthur will have immense effect throughout the length and breadth of Eastern Asia, and that the impetus it will give to the sullen hostility of the native population will seriously aggravate the task of the troops. The further the army withdraws from Southern Manchuria, the more formidable



ADMIRAL ALEXEIEFF.



becomes the work of recovering the lost ground, and the more acute the strain upon and the exasperation of the Russian public. Even in Russia public opinion is a force to be reckoned with, and nothing can make it believe that a retreat is not a disgrace and the abandonment of Port Arthur a desertion. The existence of this public opinion in Russia is something of a new fact, and its manner of being during the progress of an unsuccessful war will assuredly repay study. Even fanciful comparisons of Kutusoff and Bagration with Kuropatkin and Sassulitch, and of Hollabrunn and Smolensk with the Yalu and Kinchou, have ceased to delight the imagination or to soothe the anxieties of the reflecting portion of the Russian people.

Upon the point of press views concerning future strategy it is necessary to quote the Russian press itself, so that the ideas of the leaders of Russian thought may not run the risk of any misconception. Only a few days ago the *Viedomosti* announced the reasons which make it obligatory upon the Russian army to march to the relief of the great fortress. These reasons are—loyalty to the soldiers of the garrison, loyalty to the navy, and, finally, the imperative need of depriving Japan of the moral advantage she would gain by the capture of Port Arthur. Earlier in the month of May the *Novoe Vremya* began to prepare opinion for the approaching investment, which would continue, it declared, until that moment, sacred in the eyes of all Russians, when troops should appear from the north in sufficient numbers to deliver their comrades. Port Arthur, it continued, will do its duty, and from this time forward the rest of Russia must live under the same nervous tension as the garrison, and must take advantage of every moment of time and every outburst of energy.

The whole of Russia must be buoyed up by one thought, and only one—the Russian flag cannot be struck at Port Arthur! But we are all of us, to the last man, filled with the absolute conviction that Russia will do

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all that is necessary for the relief of Port Arthur in her own good time; therefore, we must quietly confront this fresh trial, and, sending a blessing to our distant brothers, say to ourselves—Port Arthur may be assured that Russia will do her duty.

Under the stress of a moral bombardment of this character only a man of iron nerve can keep his head. If Kuropatkin scouts the Viceroy's fears and turns a deaf ear to the admonitions of the press, he knows the forfeit. The Admiral's responsibility for further disaster is ostensibly at an end, while the confidence of the press will slowly but steadily evaporate. It is the reputation of Kuropatkin himself that will suffer most from a further withdrawal without the exaction of a military vengeance for the successive defeats of the Russian army.

There are, besides, the two great services to be considered, with their roots stretching far down into the heart of the Russian people and their branches spreading widely in every circle of Russian society. The Russian navy is an aristocratic service, and the spoilt child of the Russian Court. No one in Russia has yet acknowledged that the command of the sea is irrevocably lost. That patriotic chimera, the junction of the Baltic and Pacific squadrons, still governs the situation, and seeks to impose the law in the realms of strategy. We can have little doubt that the desperate stand at Kinchou was largely prompted by the nervous anxiety of the Viceroy and the Russian Court for the security of the Pacific squadron, when once the enemy, so entirely wanting in conventional respect for the Russian arms, establishes his siege batteries within range of the Russian port.

All the disorderly ideas concerning the charm of defensive naval war, which have warped the action and sapped the vitality of the Russian navy, have been thoroughly, not to say exhaustively, tried, and have been found wanting. The Russians must know now that a naval squadron has no place in a fortress liable

to siege, and that ships and fortifications are a contradiction in terms. Better far if, at any day or any hour since the war began, the squadron had steamed out and met its fate in sailor fashion, certain that it would have made victory almost as costly for the enemy as defeat.

But regrets are vain, the sands are running out, and the endeavour to stave off, by military sacrifice, the impending high-angle fire of the enemy's siege batteries has failed. What course remains to save the squadron and the fortress?

Sooner or later Port Arthur must fall unless relieved, and relief, save by an act of God, can only come by land or sea. The Baltic squadron is not yet ready for its work, and, when it is, two months at least must elapse before its arrival in the Yellow Sea. The army remains. If Kuropatkin is strong enough, and able enough, to deal a heavy blow at Kuroki's army, to hurl it back discomfited to the Yalu, and then to prolong his victorious march down the Liautung Peninsula, the situation changes its whole complexion in a flash of time. We may, indeed, entertain the belief that General Kuropatkin has already missed his market, but by no other means than his advance can Port Arthur and the ships it contains now be saved from the gloomy fate impending over them. The Russian general is bound hand and foot by this fatal entanglement of Port Arthur, which tends to deprive him of all strategic liberty and to urge him to risk the safety of his army to compass the relief of the beleaguered town.

Thus there is much in the situation which may impose counsels of desperation upon the Army of Manchuria, and the course which the Russian general adopts will be followed with the deepest interest and attention by the world-audience of this strange and fascinating drama. He may have, at the outside, 100,000 men, but during the weeks that he has remained inert and has allowed his enemy to concentrate at his leisure, the latter has steadily turned the situation to his own advantage. With the arrival of another

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Japanese army on the mainland all hope of accomplishing the overthrow of Kuroki's army should be at an end. The Russian commander has had his chance, such as it was, and has failed to take it. Looking back at his line of communications, he cannot hope for the intervention of the 10th and 17th Army Corps, even at reduced strength and imperfectly equipped, for another two months at least. The Russian army, declares a Russian authority in the *Novoe Vremya*, reaches from Moscow to Mukden, but he adds significantly that it does not flow in a continuous stream, but only "by drops that drip." That is the truth, and when, on one side, there flows a continuous stream, and on the other only these drops that drip, which fire buckets will be soonest filled?

Kuropatkin is probably entirely innocent of all that foolish rodomontade which the Continental press ascribed to him at the time of his departure for the East. Patience, patience, patience! That has been the burden of his advice from first to last. His idea at the outset was the abandonment of Southern Manchuria without a battle, but the unexpected delay in the Japanese advance has enabled him to collect sufficient troops at Liauyang and its vicinity to lend attraction to a stout resistance. The double defeat his troops have suffered has seriously weakened his position, and makes it almost incumbent upon him to risk a general action before any further retreat.

Despite the traditions of 1812, retreats are highly unpopular to every unbeaten army. Retreats, upon national territory, increase the strength of the retiring force at every step and daily raise up enemies upon the lines of communication of the foe. But every step back in Manchuria implies fresh enemies let loose upon the Russian army, with no reasonable hope of utilising the railway during a subsequent advance, when once it has passed into the unchallenged possession of the foe. These are some at least of the anxieties, doubts, and fears of the Russian commander, and they are

certainly aggravated by unheard-of difficulties in questions of supply, transport, movement, and security, some of which we know and others of which we can guess.

We hear, indeed, from Paris and St. Petersburg of a projected advance to the south by the General-in-Chief, while one of his subordinates remains behind to contain Kuroki's army. In view of all that has passed, no folly seems too great for the Russian command to commit; but what chance is there of success? The road, indeed, is open by Haicheng and Kaiping to Kinchou, since the Japanese force in position at Wafangkau is apparently not considerable. But at Kinchou, at least, resistance will be encountered, and the Russian-built defences, manned by Japanese, will have to be carried by storm, with Japanese gunboats on both flanks.

Meantime the lieutenant who has to contain Kuroki, or possibly Marshal Oyama, deserves our heartfelt sympathy, for the Japanese main army will soon require some containing. For Japan this is *the* operation of the campaign, and the numbers which have been assembled under the shelter of the covering force of the First Army must by this time be very considerable. Six divisions of the active army of Japan are still unaccounted for, and several of these are probably in touch with General Kuroki. The correspondents with the First Army are immured, like first-class misdemeanants, within a circle two miles in diameter at Fenghwangchenn. They see nothing and hear nothing, or at least can tell nothing, of what passes around them. Nevertheless the time runs on, and by the end of June or mid-July the summer rains will begin to fall, and they will continue, perhaps uninterruptedly if the season be wet, for forty days or more. The advanced troops of the First, or some other, Army are reported already upon the Haicheng road, at Soumentse, close to the Motien Pass, and at or near Saimatse. Everything shows that the Army of

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Manchuria will shortly be exposed to a formidable, enveloping, and yet concentrated attack, and the chances are that the main columns of the Japanese armies soon will be in movement.

Restricted though we are by the censors in point of information, the main lines of the situation are sufficiently apparent, and the course they seem to dictate to the Russian commander is not to be mistaken.

CHAPTER XXII¹

JAPAN'S DEBT TO MECKEL

It was a particularly graceful act on the part of General Baron Kodama to have telegraphed his thanks to Major-General Meckel for the services rendered to the Japanese Army, and to have ascribed the victory on the Yalu to Meckel's teaching. The Germans were not the first instructors of the Mikado's officers, since the French missions of Chanoine in 1866 and of Marguerie in 1872 may be said to have laid the earliest foundations and to have taught the Japanese the elements of drill and tactics. But the finishing touches were certainly given by Meckel and Von Weldenbruch in 1885 and subsequent years, and the Japanese were fortunate in their advisers, since Major Meckel, as he was then, was one of the best products of the school of Moltke. He was, and it goes without saying that he is still, highly educated, endowed with great natural gifts, of wide experience of men and things, and, best of all, totally devoid of the rigid pedantry of traditional Prussian militarism.

Shortly before his death Moltke assembled the officers of the Great General Staff at Berlin and told them that the rivals of Germany were her equals in numbers, in courage, and in armament. "But they are not equal to us in the command," he added, "and in that we shall always remain superior." It was this secret that Japan desired to surprise, and no one was

¹ From *The Times* of June 6, 1904.

better qualified to implant the science of command in the minds of an attentive and eager audience than the brilliant and accomplished Meckel. He knew no Japanese, and few of his listeners knew German. Every sentence of his lectures had therefore to be translated by interpreters phrase by phrase, and it was under these depressing conditions, so enervating to the average lecturer, that Meckel gradually instilled into his hearers the great principles that had made Moltke's fame and had won Prussia the hegemony of united Germany.

Almost every officer of the Japanese Staff, of field rank or above it, has sat at Meckel's feet, and the splendid staff work of the war with China, as well as that of the present campaign, is directly traceable to Meckel's inspiration. Nor was the influence of the German mission confined to the command and the direction of armies in the field; it was of the utmost utility in teaching Japan how to create and organise, at the moment of declaration of war and subsequently, all those *services de l'arrière* so vital for the preservation of efficiency in the field. More especially it taught Japan how to prepare the ground for the raising of reserve field armies—the principal distinction between the old order and the new—and further showed her how to utilise the entire resources of the territory and the population during a national war with the least possible sacrifice in time of peace. That part of the work of the German mission is not yet before us to call for judgment, since at present only the active army is in the field; but, should the war prove long and exhausting, victory will only remain with Japan if she prove capable of continually placing in the field fresh levies of trained soldiers and of maintaining the effectives of those units already under arms.

It is a commonplace in every discussion of military affairs in this country to hear it said that everything is a question of money; so many pounds sterling, so much efficiency, and so many more soldiers. That pernicious

heresy, joined to a neglect little short of appalling of the special conditions attaching to the conduct of war by a great colonial empire blessed with an insular citadel, has given England the most costly and, for its purpose, the most inefficient assemblage of armed forces that the wit of man could devise. Japan, fortunately for herself, was not in a financial position to aspire to raise armies unintelligently by the sheer brute force of the purse. She was much more nearly in the position of Prussia when the military regeneration of that monarchy began, and she was therefore abundantly justified in appealing for guidance to a nation whose early days were instinct with the rigid traditions of an almost parsimonious economy. When Frederick blew out Voltaire's candles and gave him his allowance of sugar by weight, in the form of a ration, he was only indulging in an exaggerated display of that constitutional tendency which became a cause of admiration when applied systematically to the army and all its affairs. The Great Elector put 28,000 men into the field with a Budget of £150,000, Frederick William I. 76,000 men at a cost of under a million, Frederick II. 200,000 at the price of two millions, and William III. 250,000 for under three millions. After Waterloo 140,000 men with the colours could be raised to 580,000 in war, and only cost the country £3,600,000 a year.

No doubt the Prussian army had its defects in these early days; nevertheless, it conducted the War of Liberation to a successful issue, and twice entered the enemy's capital during the Napoleonic era. Whatever results we may expect from the control of an army of highly-paid clerks directed by an amateur, resulting in a passive organism of the jelly-fish character, without even the capacity of that animal for adapting itself to a maritime environment, it is certain that Prussia at least preferred vertebra to gelatine. It was the direction of a single guiding hand, generally the Sovereign's, that was the mainspring of all efficiency,

and it must be admitted that the system resulted not only in unvarying success, but in equally invariable economy. It was the tradition of permanence and unity in military affairs, joined later with stability in effectives, that made the Prussian army formidable. It was that system of rigid economy, and of unity of direction maintained in the hands of the Emperor, that best suited the political atmosphere of Japan, and upon this sturdy stem she grafted the spirit of the German General Staff, a later growth of the Prussian system, together with short service pushed to very elaborate consequences. It has been at the cost of little more than four millions sterling a year that Japan has raised the army and obtained the success of to-day.

If Japan was materially in the situation of Prussia before the wars of German unity, there were circumstances in the moral order of ideas which were not dissimilar from those of the state she wisely took for her model. Japan had her Olmütz after Shimonoseki, and if we cannot say that the polished affront offered by the three Powers was borne by her, as it was by Prussia, because the sword had rusted in the scabbard, it is certainly true that the military and naval resources of Japan at the close of the war with China did not permit her at the time to oppose the will of the Powers with any serious hope of success.

Keeping her peace, she set to work with a serious purpose and rare tenacity, and while every child in Japan knew the object of the succeeding eight years of continual effort, the open secret of a people of nearly fifty millions remained undetected by the vain diplomacy of the greater part of the Western world. In the great traditions of her feudal system, and in the noble ethics of the *samurai*, Japan possessed a moral force which equalled, if it did not exceed the driving power of the Tugendbund. She had her fanatics, her Fichtes, and her Arndts, and she had, too, her Steins and her Hardenbergs, able and ready to organise and exploit the great explosive forces of

Japanese patriotism, while preserving all the outward appearance of restraint.

The relations of the Mikado's Government with the National Parliament are also much more akin to the conditions formerly prevailing in Prussia than to those of any Western State of the modern type. The procedure followed by the Mikado and his advisers with regard to the Imperial Diet, both before and during the war, recalls the struggles of Bismarck and his colleagues with the Prussian Parliament. We seem to hear the echo of Von Roon's speech on January 24, 1865: "Never will the King of Prussia cede to an ephemeral Parliament a single detail of the organisation indispensable for the grandeur and existence of the country."

Numbers are not everything in modern war, but no great and permanent successes have been achieved in modern times without them. The secret of Prussian successes has been attributed to a great number of secondary causes, some of which were contributing factors to victory and others not. But at the bed-rock of success lay the simple and elementary fact that Prussia in 1870 sent three men to the frontier for every one man of the French Imperial Army. Prussia placed 600,000 men in the field against 210,000 Frenchmen available to meet the first German onset, and by the end of February, 1871, when there were nothing but *mobiles* in front of them, the German numbers had grown to 1,350,787 men, of whom nearly a million were mobilised troops.

Japan has followed suit, and both on the Yalu and at Kinchou has overwhelmed the Russian defence by establishing a similar superiority of three to one. So long as this annihilating proportion is maintained so long will Japanese victories prove decisive and overwhelming.

Certainly, numbers in themselves are not everything, since an army is the product of quantity and quality, and if one of these factors is increased to the detriment

of the other the result remains always the same. But if to the higher numbers we allow the purest patriotism and unconquerable resolution to vanquish or die, and then add superior training, better leading, and at least equal armament, the campaign becomes somewhat one-sided. That is, or should be, the object held in view in the organisation of military forces; not so much to wage war as to prevent it, a purpose achieved by making war too dangerous and too onerous for an enemy to enter upon with any hope of final success. No other means ever has been discovered, or ever will be, to prevent war in ages antecedent to the millennium. When armed forces achieve that result they answer their purpose, and, no matter what they cost, are infinitely cheap. When they fall short of it they become dangerous and costly luxuries, and the people that pay for them deserve the lash of Carlyle, and the iron heel of the conqueror on their necks.

All this Japan has learnt from Prussia, and all honour where honour is due.

She has also learnt, whether directly from Meckel's teaching, or indirectly by a process of induction, the necessity for the establishment of plans of campaign based on the natural dictates of national strategy.

Nothing is stranger in this strange war of to-day than the absolute identity of the Japanese strategy in 1894 and 1904. Then, as now, the enemy's fleet was the first objective; then, as now, Pingyang was occupied by a rush; then, as now, the Yalu was reached, batteries established at Wiju, and the army thrown across upstream, Hushan occupied and the Ai River traversed by a turning force. Whether the Russians had ever heard of the battle of October 25, 1894, we cannot tell; all we know is that they occupied the same positions as the Chinese, were misled by the same ruses, and destroyed by the same attacks from the same direction. A more striking instance of the crime of neglecting military history was never seen.

The parallel did not stop there. In 1894 the

Japanese landed their Second Army near Pitszewo, the marines wading ashore and planting the national flag upon the hills as a signal to the transports. All these incidents were repeated, measure for measure, last month by the same army. There were no Chinese to offer resistance at Pitszewo in 1894, and there were no Russians in 1904. The fact that this point was named in the histories of the 1894 campaign as the only suitable spot for a landing on this coast, was entirely neglected.

Similarly, in 1894 the army advanced upon Kinchou, fought a battle there and occupied Dalny, capturing a vast quantity of material. All these incidents have now been repeated one by one, and if the Japanese seem to be people of curiously fixed ideas and to have only a single plan of campaign in their heads, it is also true to say that the Russians have hitherto found nothing better than the old Chinese plan of campaign, and have followed it with pathetic, if unreasoning, fidelity.

But there is another point of resemblance between the two campaigns which events may now permit us to recall. The special and particular distinction of Yamagata's strategy in 1894 was the double objective which he never ceased to dangle before the eyes of his enemy. Peking and Mukden—these were the two objectives, and to the last the Chinese never knew the real purpose in the minds of their foe. Thus, while the Second Army landed in Liautung in 1894 and advanced on Port Arthur to clear the air on this side, the First Army took position north of the Yalu, executed wide reconnaissances, and allowed it to be freely discussed that Mukden was the great objective. Misled by this diversion, the Chinese remained passive in the Liao Valley, and the best general of China allowed himself to be played with until the Second Japanese Army had taken Port Arthur and was in a position to co-operate with the advance.

A similar comedy has been very successfully per-

formed during the past six weeks, Kuroki enacting the part of Tachimi and Kuropatkin that of Ikotenga. Experience is lost upon an army that cannot reflect.

The Japanese should certainly convey their thanks to the experts of the civilised world whose intelligent anticipation of events which have not occurred have so materially aided to chain Kuropatkin to the soil by agitating St. Petersburg during the most critical weeks of the war. Now that Kinchou has been fought and that the situation of the Second Army is known, the scales must fall from Russian eyes and they may at length perceive that every incident of recent history is nothing more nor less than the repetition, step by step, of the precedent of 1894.

Kuroki is now too strong to be easily defeated, and we may presently see re-enacted towards Haicheng those other incidents in which the present Prime Minister of Japan played such a distinguished part in 1894. There will only then remain the story of Weihaiwei to retrace, and that tale may be told in due course, with only a change of venue corresponding to altered circumstances.

The principle of a double objective, holding an army in perpetual doubt as to the enemy's intentions, has never been quite so well or so continually employed as by Yamagata and his successors. They use it on the strategic theatre and they use it on the battlefield, reserving the power of always altering their plans according to the situation and dispositions of the foe. Whether Meckel taught them this stroke or whether they evolved it for themselves it would be interesting to learn. It has certainly puzzled the Russians as completely as it did the Chinese; it caused both to endeavour to guard everything, and consequently to be everywhere weak. That is one of the reasons that entitles us to talk of the "art" of war.

If the Japanese, thanks to what we may call the Yamagata opening, occupy a very favourable position on the strategic chessboard, nothing is finally com-

promised on the Russian side while Port Arthur resists and Kuropatkin remains unbeaten.

As to Port Arthur, it fell in 1894 after a single day's fight, though defended by 10,000 Chinese occupying permanent defences armed with 330 cannon ranging up to 20- and 24-centimètre Krupps. Against these the Japanese brought up 36 siege and 64 field guns and attacked the north-west front, carrying the place within 29 days of the landing at Pitszewo. Both garrison and armament, as well as the works themselves, are now incomparably stronger, and the fortress cannot be treated in this cavalier fashion until the heaviest siege guns are brought up and superiority of fire obtained at the point chosen for attack.

In the main theatre Kuropatkin has yet to be dealt with, and if he intends to accept battle we must believe that he should now be able to call down parts at least of the three Siberian reserve divisions which should by this time have begun to draw within call.

Whether the Japanese are wise to allow him so much rope is a matter for the future to decide. The Japanese main army will march when its hour strikes, and meanwhile Marshal Oyama appears to regard with indifference, if not with satisfaction, the arrival of reinforcements on the Russian side which seem to denote the intention of waging a decisive battle.

CHAPTER XXIII¹
*CONCERNING FIRST-CLASS IMPREG-
NABLE FORTRESSES*

BEFORE a nation commits itself to the heavy expenditure involved in the construction of a first-class fortress, it should ask itself what national purpose the stronghold is designed to serve, and whether it is likely to accomplish this object or to defeat it.

The rule is elementary, yet it has generally been honoured in the breach rather than in the observance, and seldom more than by Russia to-day. Port Arthur and Vladivostok intercept no primary line of operations of an enemy attacking Russia in East Asia. The war might conceivably be finished without a shot being fired by the batteries of these strongholds. On the other hand, they absorb 50,000 Russian troops, numbers which might ensure victory for Kuropatkin's field army, could they be united with it. The Pacific fortresses are therefore, so far as the decision of the campaign on land is concerned, a serious drain on Russia and a positive encumbrance to the Russian commander.

It is true that they offer a delusive refuge to squadrons unable to keep the sea ; but, if the navy using them can wage offensive war successfully, they are not required, and, if it cannot, they are unable to restore suspended naval animation.

Marine traps like Port Arthur and Vladivostok decoy into their seductive havens the residuum of a

¹ From *The Times* of June 15, 1904.

beaten fleet, which then reverts to the attitude of the passive resister. Whether the entrance be then blocked by material obstacles, as at Port Arthur, or merely watched, as at Vladivostok, the squadrons in harbour are placed in bond under the enemy's seal. Owing to the great range and destructive force of modern projectiles, no harbour within five miles of blue water can be reckoned safe, and, if the enemy is in a position to land an army and assail the fortress from the land side, or invest it and let famine do its work, its fall is only a question of time, should no relieving force appear on land or sea and win a decisive battle. The construction of first-class fortresses, maritime or other, is therefore a luxury which national strategy can only permit itself after a reasoned consideration of the object in view and of the question whether the fortress is likely to attain this object or whether it is not.

It is certain that we in England have constructed, year in, year out, a vast number of useless fortifications, and have even gone so far as to prepare the elements of fixed defences for the Surrey hills, conformably with current heresies concerning the defence of London which have only enjoyed a precarious existence by reason of the obdurate manner in which they have hitherto shunned the light. We have this to urge in extenuation—that we have little experience to guide us, since, despite a national existence of many centuries and continual wars with all the greatest Powers of the world, fortification in England, whether inshore or on the coast, is in the happy condition of peoples who have no history. Does not that fact alone throw a glare of light upon the devious paths we are following? What should we say of Japanese intelligence if the statesmen of that country had organised half a million men or more whose services were not available in Manchuria owing to the terms of their enlistment? What sarcasm would be too biting if Japan had accumulated the elements of semi-permanent defences on Fujiyama, and had told off 120,000 stay-at-home troops for the defence of Tokio?

In countries where the military engineer and the specialist rule as tyrants, and the sciences they expound are accepted as the capital branches of the art of war, we know at once that instincts are debased, and that the countries themselves are falling into a rapid military decline. The corps of Engineers supplies all countries with some of the brightest ornaments of the profession of arms. Nevertheless, it is generally a misfortune when an engineer, who has been absorbed for years in the technical side of his work, attains to the highest rank in the army and to a position of preponderance in councils of state. The art of war is as far as possible removed from an exact science. Questions of finesse, sagacity, character, tradition, and other moral elements enter into every problem of war, and the man whose mind is mainly formed by the study of exact sciences has only a sorry equipment to fit him for the higher leading of troops. As between the most accomplished of engineers and a soldier who is a man of the world in the best sense of the term, with wide experience of men and things, the choice of a leader of men is never in doubt.

If we could combine thorough scientific training in early years with the broad grasp of affairs which can only come from ripe experience in a wide field of activities, then we could promise ourselves a succession of Gordons, Kitcheners, and Sydenham Clarkes; but such combination is at present wholly fortuitous even in England, and almost impossible anywhere else. The engineer is a good servant, but a bad master, and his supremacy in military councils is generally a sign of decadence in the art of war. Nevertheless, we must not rush from one extreme to another, nor cry upon the house-tops that the art of the engineer is useless to the modern state. Fortification, intelligently employed and kept in its proper and very subordinate place, is useful, and must not be depreciated because some clever scientists occasionally break loose and are allowed to run riot in their speciality at home or abroad.

A sane national policy will never admit the plea of the extremists that all fortification is harmful. Even the United States, quick as they have been to learn the secrets of sea power expounded with such rare force and ability by Mahan, have not allowed their coasts to remain disarmed, and are now engaged upon a perhaps too monumental work to promote the security of their commercial harbours and to free the navy for the pursuance of its legitimate mission. Great centres of maritime activity must not be exposed to the ruinous enterprise of a raiding division of armoured or other cruisers, nor must hostile warships of any kind be allowed to steam unfought within range of arsenals, which are the factories and the foundation of naval activity on home and foreign stations. But between the reasonable security thus afforded and the creation of a vast place-of-arms defended by 30,000 men and 500 guns there is a very wide gulf.

We must not make too much of American enthusiasm for coast defence, since the political factor enters far too largely into these designs for us to accept them as our model. We shall venture to prophesy that, when strictly military principles inspire American initiative, the grass will grow over many of these discarded works, and that the keen intellect of our sharp but misguided cousins will bend the energies of the race into the preparation of offensive war—the only form of hostilities which affects the decisions of a potential enemy.

If the Japanese decide to besiege Port Arthur, we shall witness either the apotheosis, or the unregretted demise, of the first-class fortress.

No one can say that the place itself fails to fulfil nearly all the requirements of the text-books. In the words of the *Novoe Vremya*, "Port Arthur, according to the conviction of the best authorities, is not merely a first-class fortress, but the most impregnable of all first-class fortresses." It is a phrase to be retained.

If we consider that the defence of Port Arthur has

been the labour of years ; that strong, semi-closed works, with gorges protected by masonry walls loopholed for musketry, and ditches flanked by escarp and counter-scarp galleries, quarried out of the rock, have been constructed on all the surrounding heights, and, further, that some 400 siege guns, besides naval ordnance, are in position, mounted on disappearing or overbank carriages, we are entitled to conclude that, if 88,000 Russians of the land and sea forces cannot hold out almost indefinitely in this fastness, all the cost and labour and art will have been misapplied.

Since modern artillery reached its present stage of development and enlisted the aid of high explosives, permanent fortification has never been subjected to the supreme test of serious war. Our late enemies the Boers, once acquainted with the power of our artillery, very wisely regarded the forts of Pretoria as useless lumber, and adopted tactics calculated to render our guns as far as possible harmless. Against Boer snipers, sheltering behind rocks the size of Apsley House, modern artillery was almost disarmed, nor was the wandering pom-pom in the invisible donga a much more satisfactory mark. Yet on the rare occasions when the Boers occupied text-book positions, such as the breastwork above Hart's Hill on the Tugela, or Bergandal Kopje, the power of modern artillery asserted itself, and gave a fair indication of what might be achieved against closed works by a properly organised siege train in the hands of trained artillerymen. To call a man an artilleryman is not to make him one, and garrison artillery demands even greater science and more highly developed training than the more popular branches of the Royal Regiment. We have seen what absence of training has meant at Port Arthur. The roadstead, swept by the fire of 150 Russian guns on shore, has been the happy hunting-ground of the light flotilla of the Japanese navy for over four months. During this period the flotilla has ranged through the roadstead at will, and in a dozen fights has not had to

deplore the loss of a solitary torpedo boat sunk by Russian fire, although a single projectile from a single gun, properly aimed, would have sent any one of these craft to the bottom. The fact is as inconceivable as the inference is momentous, and, if searching tests in night firing are not imposed upon garrison artillery, one of the most striking lessons of this war will have been neglected.

We do not at present know whether the Japanese intend to besiege Port Arthur or merely to invest it, although the Battle of Kinchou points to drastic measures. But it is probable that, if General Oku or some other commander is ordered and able to drive in the Russian garrison at Port Arthur behind the works of the main line of defence, and to place his batteries within medium ranges, the storm of fire that will eventually descend upon the forts in the sector chosen for attack should silence these works without great difficulty. Against the high-angle fire of heavy howitzers, in positions invisible to the enemy, supported by the sweeping, scythe-like action of shrapnel fired by high velocity guns, fortress defence soon experiences the sense of all its inherent weakness. With ample bomb-proof cover and resolute troops, the enemy may not be driven out; the hotter the fire the less the chance either of reinforcement or retreat. But a closed work can be so wrecked and overwhelmed by the converging fire of the heaviest distant batteries that its main armament may be reduced to impotence during the progress of the succeeding assault.

The work of landing, transporting, and placing in battery the great siege guns required to secure superiority of fire in a given sector is very heavy, and must always take a very long time. But it is not necessary that the guns of the attack should be numerically superior to the whole armament of the fortress; all that is required is that they should prove superior to the armament of a given sector of the defence, the fall of which will entail the fall of the whole.

Hitherto the Japanese naval bombardments have been trivial, preliminary, and experimental. What preparations the sailors of Japan may have made to second the efforts of the army we do not know, but it is possible that the navy both expects and intends to play a leading part in the final act. But even if it were otherwise, the events of the war show that 12-in. guns can rake the defended area from end to end; they may also prove able to strike in flank and in reverse the forts of the land sector assailed by the army.

Worst of all will be the deplorable situation of the Pacific squadron, cooped up in the narrow harbour like pleasure-boats in Boulter's Lock on a June Sunday, almost wholly defenceless and immobile, and with their decks exposed to the fatal effect of high-angle fire from all points of the horizon.

When this scabrous moment arrives the Russian defenders may remember Dragomiroff and his advice, so "energetically repudiated"; while Englishmen will recall the words of the late Lord Salisbury at the Albert Hall in May, 1898: "I think Russia has made a great mistake in taking Port Arthur; I do not think it is of any use to her whatever."

CHAPTER XXIV¹

THE RUSSIAN COUNTER-OFFENSIVE, JUNE 14-28

THE Russian march down the Liautung Peninsula has been undertaken and has met with the fate it deserved. Nearly ten thousand² men killed, wounded, and prisoners, with colours and 14 guns left as trophies for the enemy, represent the penalty of incompetence in the higher command and cause us to doubt whether the directing spirit on the Russian side is wholly accountable for its actions. By whose orders or to what purpose this rash adventure was undertaken no one can say ; but, until evidence is given to clear General Kuropatkin of the responsibility, on him alone falls the blame. There is no disgrace in defeat in battle if a commander has given himself and his troops all the chances that circumstances afford. But the hazarding of detachments far from support, in situations where even success can lead to no serious benefit, and their deliberate exposure to the overwhelming attack of superior numbers, gives the enemy 99 chances in 100 of victory. It is too much.

The so-called despatch by General Kuropatkin in reference to the battle carries us no further than the morning of June 15, and then discreetly drops the curtain to veil from us the closing scene. The despatch

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of June 17, 20, 23 and July 7, 1904.

² General Kuropatkin admitted 3,200 casualties, but added that the list was incomplete. The Japanese buried 1,854 Russian dead and took 300 prisoners ; the Russian wounded are estimated at 7,400 men.

is dated the 15th, and appears to consist of a succession of telegrams clumsily pieced together, and with all, or nearly all, the illuminating paragraphs removed. General Kuropatkin could not have penned such a fragmentary and inconsequent narrative if he had tried, and we must rather attribute this tangle of confused dates and muddled incidents to some underling at the Russian capital who has been ordered to strike out all paragraphs explaining the consequences of the movements described.

No soldier who studies the plans of the battlefield of Telissu will feel any surprise at the heavy casualty list of June 15. It is a revelation of the tactics of the respective combatants. On the Russian side there were about 34 battalions, a cavalry brigade, and the artillery of three divisions—namely, 96 guns—and it seems reasonable to conclude that not less than 35,000 combatants were on the field. Against these the Japanese brought up the best part of three divisions and a cavalry brigade, while it is alleged, but not yet proved, that their artillery was double the strength of the Russian. General Baron Stackelberg, who commanded the Russian force, appears to have occupied the very restricted front allotted to an army corps by the Russian regulations, framed for the *Massenschlacht* on the Vistula, and to have fought an old-world battle in an old-world manner. When General Oku became aware of the Russian advance he at once determined on attack, expecting that the enemy would cling to the railway, and intending to hold him at Telissu while turning his right and cutting off his retreat. The right wing, consisting of cavalry, moved up the Tashaho, the centre along the railway, while the left, leaving the Fuchan road at Wukiatusun, headed for Nachialing, whence easy access could be obtained to the right of the Russian position. This movement began from Pulautien on June 13, and the Russians appeared to ignore the threat of the Japanese left. By noon on the 14th the Japanese centre and left were on a line from Tapingkou to Chaochiatun (N.). A reconnaissance





showed that the Russians were massed astride the railway, and apparently anticipated a frontal attack. The Japanese centre pushed on, and, establishing their artillery in position, engaged the Russians at a range of 3 to 4 kilometres. On the night of June 14-15 the Japanese advanced to Tayankou, the right conforming, while the flanking column on the left reached Nachialing as ordered. In a foggy morning on June 15 a fierce artillery duel began at 5 a.m., and three hours later the Japanese centre began to advance. At 9.30 the flank attack began to develop, the troops advancing from this side in three columns from the Kaokiatun heights upon Wanchiatun, Makiafaushan, and Hanchiatun. To meet this dangerous enveloping attack the Russians placed guns upon Lunkoushan, and were compelled to check a plucky offensive movement which had begun against the Japanese right at too early an hour before the battle had taken shape. The whole Japanese line then advanced, and by 3 p.m. the enemy was broken and fled in confusion, with a loss of some 8,000 to 10,000 men, 20 guns, and 400 prisoners. The Japanese lost some 900 killed and wounded.

Highly coloured word-pictures of the severity of the Japanese artillery fire have been put forward to account for the Russian defeat and loss of guns. It is true that quick-firing artillery had here its first chance of demonstrating all its power and of employing the *rafale* or gust-fire with fatal effect. But there should have been no surprise as to its results, since the trial-ground has long ago proved all that it is necessary to know about numbers of bullets which fall in a given space in a given time and similar questions so dear to theorists, and it only remains for generals to adopt tactics suitable to the age. Stackelberg's position was turned on both flanks and exposed to fire at effective ranges from front, flanks, and rear. Against such fire no human troops can stand up, and it is the affair of generalship to prevent its occurrence.

The Russians got clear after heavy losses, the record

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of which mounts up day by day. The defeated troops covered twenty-two miles between 3 p.m. and night, and continued their flight on the 16th, when they must have reached Kaiping in a very disorganised and exhausted condition. Japanese troops from Siuyen reached the Sanpaling Pass over the Sungyo hills on the 16th, and must have been just too late to head off the retreat.

The most serious matter in all this affair is the doubtful point which arises whether Kuropatkin possesses the strategical instinct indispensable for the successful command of large forces in the field. The Yalu was bad enough, but so long as it remained alone the defeat might have been unchivalrously allowed to stand to the account of a subordinate, as so frequently happened in South Africa. The Yalu was followed, however, by the long inactivity of the Russian army in front of General Kuroki, affording that leader time to secure his position and to receive reinforcements. Then came Kinchou, and the proof it afforded that some 80,000 Russian troops had been deliberately imprisoned in the Kwantung trap, a disaster followed by aimless skirmishes along General Kuroki's front in which the Russians invariably contrived to be inferior in numbers and were always compelled to retreat. Finally, there is the crowning folly of this march to the south, confirming the conclusions which earlier events have been slowly compelling us to form.

However fully we may admit the difficulties of Kuropatkin's position, this succession of errors and defeats discloses that the genius of leadership is not very highly developed in the Russian commander, and that he is unable to rise to the level of a serious situation. The good old rule was to march separately and fight united. The Russian commander reverses the order, and he may take cold comfort from the fact that he is not the first general by a great many who has failed by reason of his inability to keep his forces together.

Some criticism has been aroused by the failure of the Japanese army at Telissu to pursue effectively, but pursuits are as easy in theory as they are difficult in practice. The Japanese who were engaged at Telissu were Oku's Second Army, which had fought the severe action of Kinchou on May 26. Before Telissu these troops had marched hard for five days, during four of which there had been constant fighting, culminating in the battle of the 15th with its serious losses. The troops were widely scattered at the end of the day, and probably in some confusion. No one who has witnessed that marvellous spectacle, an army in flight, as most British soldiers have often done, can be sanguine that an organised force can often hope to come up with it. Moreover, there was a fair chance that Russian reinforcements would meet the retreating army and show front, while the movements of the victors were necessarily dependent on those of other columns not yet completely ready to advance. In these circumstances the Japanese were wise to spend the afternoon of the 15th in resting their men, restoring order, and replenishing their ammunition and supplies. Of what they did on the 16th and subsequently we still await information. All we know for certain is that a Japanese force reached a point twenty-five miles south of Kaiping on June 21 ; of further fighting there is as yet no serious evidence.

When General Kuropatkin heard of Stackelberg's defeat he ordered down troops from Haicheng to cover the retreat, and went in person to review the situation and to address his beaten troops. A routed army is not a pleasant sight, and the stories he will have heard to account for the disaster will not have been encouraging. On the 19th, according to his report of that day to the Tsar, he seems to have begun to think that he saw a glimmer of light in the prevailing darkness. The 6,000 men he sent to Saimatse found nothing in front of them, while reconnaissances towards Fenghwangchenn met with little resistance. The Russian general appears surprised. On the other hand, reports of what

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he describes as a "rather important movement" in the direction of Haicheng and Tashihchiao have come in, and he may anticipate a formidable attack upon these points by the massed forces of his enemy.

Some observers in this country have criticised the great extension of the Japanese front, pointing out that it covers nearly 250 miles and offers an excellent chance for a counter-stroke by the Russian commander. The front covered, or rather scouted, is certainly great, and it has had the effect of compelling Kuropatkin to detach troops to watch all avenues of approach over an immense area. But if the Japanese march separately, they at least fight united, or at all events have hitherto done so, and there is nothing whatever at this moment, save some scattered Russian garrisons in the mountains, to hinder a combined advance over the passes into the Liao Valley by the united forces of practically the whole active army of Japan in Manchuria. It would be the culmination of one of the best-thought-out and most interesting strategic plans that the world has seen since the time of Napoleon, and the result of this first phase of the campaign will depend upon the issue of the fighting.

From Fenghwangchenn, Siuyen, and Kaiping columns can converge, as in 1894, into the Liao Valley, and the fact of small mobile forces having made feints over the wide front held by the First Army offers absolutely no proof whatever that the Japanese are converts to the system of *petits paquets* when serious business is afoot. When the gillie is ready with the gaff we do not have out so much line as while our fish is playing himself tired.

Three weeks at most separate us from the season of the rains, and in these three weeks Kuropatkin's reputation as a general and the fate of his covering troops holding the passes will probably be decided. Nothing whatever that he can do in the way of a counter-stroke from his centre or left can seriously affect the situation if his main force stands at Haicheng or elsewhere in this

district and is attacked by the united strength of the Japanese armies converging upon him. He may take Saimatse, even Fenghwangchenn and Antung, and march right down into Korea if he pleases ; nothing on this side, not even Rennenkampf's eccentric roving, will have the slightest consequence if the main army is overwhelmed. When once the weight of the Japanese army is thrown upon the side of Haicheng, Antung and Takushan become needless as bases. Store and supply ships can utilise the west coast of the Liautung Peninsula and accompany the army ; there is Dalny and the railway, probably restored, and in due course there will be Niuchwang and the Liau itself, navigable for junks as far as Tieling, the throat of the Russian line of retreat, upon which the Japanese General Staff must long to close its grip.

The Russian cruisers at Vladivostok have hitherto done little to boast about. Their cruise in the Sea of Japan between February 9 and 14 only resulted in the sinking of a small merchant vessel. On April 25 they made a fresh appearance off Gensan and sank the *Kinshu Maru*, carrying a company of infantry, who refused to surrender.

This squadron, consisting of the *Gromoboi*, *Rossia*, and *Rurik*, appeared off Tsushima in the Straits of Korea on June 15, in pursuance of its allotted duty of interfering with the maritime communications of the enemy, and sank the Japanese transport *Hitachi Maru*, of 6,000 tons, reducing also the *Sado Maru* to a condition which barely enabled her to be run ashore. Not the slightest effort was made by the Russian cruisers to save the Japanese on board the sinking vessels, and for this neglect the Russian navy incurred universal reprobation.

Of these cruisers the *Rurik* is the slowest and least efficient, and as long as the division keeps together the speed of the whole will be limited to that of the slowest ship. The long inactivity of these cruisers and the existence of a fine dock at their base enabled them to

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put to sea in good trim for cruising and fighting, but it would be a sanguine estimate that would give the *Rurik* a continuous sea-speed of more than 15 knots at the outside.

It will be observed from the record of its course after leaving the Straits of Korea that this cruiser division steamed at an average speed of 11·5 knots, and as it steamed due east and then south after leaving Vladivostok, we must believe that the Russian Admiral Besobrazoff left port about nightfall on June 11. Three days' steaming at an economical rate of speed on the course attributed to him would have brought the Russian admiral to the neighbourhood of Tsushima on the evening of the 14th. He lay off that island during the night, and was last heard of in the Genkai Gulf at about 4 p.m. on the 15th, being then 40 miles distant from Moji, at the entrance to the Straits of Shimonoseki, and having effected all the damage that lay in his power within the limits of time he was able to allow himself.

What was Admiral Kamimura doing all this time? We are not told, but we are informed that he started in pursuit at 9.30 a.m. on the 15th, and from other sources we learn that warships left Sasebo the same day in chase of the Russians. The inference, which may be right or wrong, is that Kamimura was at Sasebo when the news of the raid reached him. By remaining in the Genkai Sea for so long the Russians ran a very fair chance of interception, and, if the Japanese arrangements had been at all on a level with the requirements of the situation, the Russian cruisers would have been followed and effectively kept under observation, if not also attacked by torpedo craft or warships, in the course of the afternoon or night of the 15th.

The Japanese proceedings in respect to the Vladivostok cruisers have from the first been singularly unfortunate. Admiral Kamimura has twice allowed the enemy to slip through his fingers, to effect damage, and to get off scot-free. Considering the strong and fairly numerous division believed to be at his disposal

and the enhanced power of the superior navy accruing from wireless telegraphy, the result is distinctly disappointing.

The Russian admiral seems to have calculated to a nicety the number of hours he could allow himself for braving the islanders in the heart of their home waters. If he knew that Kamimura was at Sasebo or Masanpo he would also have known that at the first sign of his appearance there would be an angry buzz and hot pursuit. With an inferior force, and at a distance of 650 miles from his base, the question he had to decide was what to do next. If he had shaped a course for Vladivostok, the chances are that the superior speed of the Japanese vessels would have led to a collision, or at least brought them to Vladivostok before him. He therefore very wisely steamed north-east, made prize of a sailing vessel four miles off Oki Island, where he was seen at 3 p.m. on the 16th, and continued his course towards the western entrance of the Tsugaru Straits, where he was seen and reported at 5.30 a.m. on the 18th, having covered the distance of 700 miles from the scene of his depredations in $61\frac{1}{2}$ hours, or at a continuous speed of 11.5 knots. He was bound to ask himself what orders the Japanese admiral would be given when the Korean Straits were reported clear of Russians, and he may have judged that, if Kamimura found no trace of his enemy in the straits, he would naturally head for Vladivostok at full speed.

If the Japanese had utilised the islands which stand like sentries athwart the northern approaches to the Straits of Korea for the purposes of wireless telegraphy, a perfect network of maritime intelligence might have been secured and all this loss prevented. These islands lie in ideal positions for the purpose, forming a chain of natural posts of observation 250 miles north of the straits. With wireless equipment on the islands of Argonaut, Dagelet, Hornet, and Oki, connected with the telegraph system of Korea and Japan on each flank, and supplemented by a service of scouts for night patrolling, no enemy could well have passed to the south

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unobserved and unreported, since the greatest distance between any two of these points is under 100 miles. The position of these islands recalls the Cyanean rocks, which, according to ancient tradition, floated on the face of the waters of the Bosphorus to protect the entrance of the Euxine from the eyes of profane curiosity.

When the Russian admiral reached the western entrance of the Tsugaru Straits he had been six and a half days at sea, and must have covered some 1,500 miles. In the old days sails allowed of systematised cruiser warfare, and there were no limitations to means of propulsion save want of wind, which affected both sides in equal measure. To-day the radius of action of the *croiseur-corsaire*, and indeed of steamships and warships of all kinds, is limited by the question of coal, which places cruiser warfare upon a totally different basis. Judging by our own experiences, and reckoning that the Russians steamed throughout their cruise at a reasonably economical rate of speed, we should expect the *Rurik* to have used up one-half of her *maximum* bunker capacity of coal by the morning of the 18th—namely, between 900 and 1,000 tons out of the 2,000 she is believed to be able to take on board. Her lease of life, provided no fresh supplies were available and the division did not come to anchor, would then be limited to June 24, by which time she, and probably her consorts too, must obtain fresh coal or run the risk of perishing by sheer inanition.

All this must have been considered before Besobrazoff left port, and, as he has not as yet been interfered with, we must believe that his plans are proceeding according to programme. It is a fascinating problem to weigh the chances of what these plans may be, since, if only a sailor of wide and varied experience can pretend to form a conclusion, it may be permissible for others to endeavour to point out the immense difficulties that beset the conduct of maritime war under new and wholly modern conditions.

Attention should first be drawn to the fact that the

Russian admiral was last seen heading north-west on the morning of Saturday last, and that, continuing on his present course, he must either make for the Gulf of Tartary or traverse the Straits of La Pérouse and enter the ocean. The Gulf of Tartary is not completely open to navigation before the end of May, and this fact may partly explain the long inactivity of the Vladivostok division, since at an earlier period this avenue of escape would not have been open. There are at Vladivostok ships like the *Lena*¹ which might serve as storeships and colliers, and might easily have left port with the admiral and have been given a rendezvous at Nikolaievsk or elsewhere. Again, it is possible, during the long period that has elapsed since the war began, that the Russian Admiralty may have despatched colliers from Europe or America to meet the cruisers at some unfrequented island in the Pacific, and have thus afforded them more scope and liberty.

The flying or movable base has not received the attention it deserves on the part of some naval Powers. It seems to have been proved that floating docks, constructed in sections, can be towed at the rate of 100 miles a day, and if to this be added storeships, colliers, and all the other requirements of a cruiser division, it is possible to transform some unfrequented island or harbour into a very valuable base, combining all the advantages of the useful with the unexpected. Whether, however, we can credit the Russian Admiralty with the skill and energy required for the accomplishment of such a task is an open question, and of these two objectives—Nikolaievsk, or an island in the Pacific—the former seems more probable as the rendezvous of the colliers, if they have been provided.

But we have also to consider that the Russian admiral must have been perfectly well aware that his appearance off the Tsugaru Straits and his disappearance to the north would be instantly reported at Tokio. If

¹ The *Lena* broke out and made for San Francisco, where she was interned till the end of the war.

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he had intended to make for Nikolaievsk unobserved, or to become lost in the ocean, he would have kept out of sight of land. The hope of picking up a stray steamer or two off the straits would hardly have induced him to show himself at this point, since he would have known that the news of his appearance on the 14th would have been immediately telegraphed to Hakodate and that the movements of all steamers would have been cancelled. On the other hand, he may have hoped and expected that the news of his northward course would reach Kamimura at Vladivostok about the 19th or 20th and would have drawn him away from his watch.

In these circumstances, if Admiral Besobrazoff desired to regain his base, he would be likely to double in his tracks on the evening of the 18th and steam hard to the south, hoping to slip back to port unobserved on the night of the 20th or 21st,¹ when his enemy had been coaxed away. There is so much Grand Duke in the Russian strategy that there is a very fair chance that the Russian admiral may not have been allowed to cut himself entirely adrift from Vladivostok, as his situation seems to require. So long as he can be used as a pawn in the game, so long may the Russian Admiralty cling to him in the desperate hope of diverting the Japanese from their prey at Port Arthur.

To some extent, indeed, his diversion in the straits may have reduced the pressure of pursuit if the *Bayan* and *Novik* and a few other of the faster vessels endeavoured to escape their impending doom. The sudden appearance of the *Novik* outside Port Arthur on the 14th, synchronising as it did with Besobrazoff's raid, had all the appearance of concerted action, but the cruiser returned to port, and there has been no further sign of an endeavour to escape. The act would not necessarily be impossible, given a fair share of luck and less than half the intelligence displayed by Prince Louis of Battenberg during the Mediterranean manœuvres of 1902.

¹ The squadron returned to Vladivostok on June 20.

All now depends upon the action of Kamimura. If he is wise he will remain near Vladivostok till the morning of the 24th or 25th, certain that, if Besobrazoff does not return by that date, he must have other designs in view and other means of replenishing his bunkers. The regulation harbour of refuge is a terrible incubus to cruisers forced to use it, affording as it does a benchmark to the enemy, who can always hope that here, at least, he will sooner or later run his enemy to ground.¹

Following closely upon Besobrazoff's raid there came a very half-hearted attempt of the Russian squadron at Port Arthur to break the Japanese blockade on June 23. The mechanics from the Baltic yards had

¹ This account has been allowed to stand as a good instance of the fog of naval war under modern conditions. Later information threw more light upon Kamimura's action, and disclosed the difficulties under which this excellent officer laboured. It appears that Admiral Kamimura became aware at 8 a.m. on the 16th that the hostile cruisers were off Oki Island, steering southward. He at once despatched torpedo boats to guard the channel between Tsushima and Iki, ordered west-bound steamers to take refuge at Takeshiki, and telegraphed to Moji harbour to postpone all departures.

He then set out with his squadron to meet the enemy, and by means of wireless telegraphy ordered the warships at Takeshiki and the scouting vessels to join at an appointed rendezvous. The weather was thick and stormy, and the conditions adverse for a successful chase. The cruiser *Tsushima*, however, sighted the enemy and maintained touch, reporting at noon that the enemy were fifteen miles south of Oki Island. At 1.30 p.m. she reported that they were five miles from the same point. The weather then thickened and she lost sight of the enemy altogether. Kamimura hastened to the south of Oki Island, but could find nothing; he then made chase to the north, hoping to engage the enemy in the morning, and his torpedo boats searched for the Russians throughout the night. In the morning the weather cleared, and though the search was continued throughout the days of the 16th and 17th it proved fruitless, and Kamimura returned to his base in the straits. The Russians, meanwhile, after allowing themselves to be signalled from Hokkaido on the 17th, and off the Tsugaru Straits on the 18th, steering north, doubled back on the night of the 18th, and reached Vladivostok on the 20th. The destroyers had also made a raid and had reached the Japanese coast, but had not effected any serious damage.

It will be interesting to learn, later on, the orders under which Kamimura was acting, and the principles which governed the strategy laid down for him at this period. Apparently Japan did not possess the necessary margin of naval strength to permit of a constant watch upon Vladivostok. She therefore concentrated her energies upon the main objective, and steadily refused to abandon the substance for the shadow. With Port Arthur closely beset, and the Straits of Korea strongly held, she was apparently content to allow the Vladivostok cruisers the run of their teeth until the fall of Port Arthur was an accomplished fact, certain that nothing they could do would materially influence the course of the war.

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succeeded in patching up the ships injured in previous operations in a more rapid and effectual manner than had been anticipated. The dry dock at Port Arthur could not take in a battleship at the outbreak of war, though it could take a cruiser. The repairs of the *Novik* were made good by February 21, and those of the *Pallada* three weeks later. The *Tzarevitch* and *Retvisan* were repaired by the use of coffer-dams, and were ready for sea by June 20, having thus been useless for 182 critical days. The sortie of the squadron, almost at full strength, was in the nature of a surprise.

On the morning of June 23 the Japanese inshore squadron saw three Russian battleships, five cruisers, and ten destroyers emerging from the harbour, preceded by several counter-mining vessels. A report was immediately sent to Admiral Togo, who hastened to the rendezvous at Encounter Rock, sending forward two of his torpedo flotillas to assist the scouts. At 11 a.m. three more battleships came out, and some fighting ensued between the Japanese light craft and the Russian destroyers, one of which took fire. When the fairway was clear, the *Novik*, always badly handled by Captain von Essen, steamed out to sea, followed by the squadron. As on April 13, one Japanese squadron drew the enemy towards the south, while Togo, with the main battle fleet, lay in waiting near Encounter Rock and concentrated his destroyers. His total force was four battleships, four armoured cruisers, several smaller cruisers, and twenty-two torpedo craft. At 6.15 p.m. the Russians were sighted eight miles north-west of the island in double column line ahead, steering south. Admiral Togo steamed out on a parallel course, and at 7.30 p.m. the two fleets were 14,000 mètres apart. As the Japanese edged nearer, intending to draw towards the enemy's van, the Russian admiral Vithöft changed course slightly to starboard. A little later, or about 8 p.m., he gave up the idea of battle, if indeed he had ever seriously

entertained it, or had any definite purpose in view at all, and, changing his course, steered for the syren harbour. The Japanese turned together eight points, and pursued in line till sunset at 8.20 p.m., when they ported eight points and sent forward the torpedo craft to attack. At 9.30 p.m. this attack was delivered five miles from harbour, but it was ineffective, and at 10.30 p.m. the Russians were back in the roadstead, where they were again attacked several times in the course of the night, but without success. On June 24 the squadron re-entered port, some ships towed and some under their own steam.

Some interesting points relating to this sortie are raised by M. Bernet in *Le Temps*. He informs us that, according to the Russian table of co-efficients, based on tonnage, speed, and armament, the Japanese battleships of Admiral Togo's squadron on June 23 were to Vithöft's battleships in the proportion of 92·7 to 191, but that the Japanese cruisers represented 266 to the Russian 89.

It may be remarked that the French version of the Viceroy's account of the proceedings on June 23 gives Admiral Togo only three first-class battleships, while our version gives him four. This may make a difference in M. Bernet's figures, but, taking them as they stand, they give rise to some considerations. When the Russian admiral informs us that he avoided battle because the enemy's squadron was greatly superior, we are asked to believe that he had a calculating officer on the bridge who informed him, with the desired rapidity, that he was 78·7 points inferior to his enemy, and was therefore not in a position to engage. "I decided to return," he says, "esteeming that these tactics would occasion less loss." No one can gainsay that statement, but, if the Russian navy acts on the principles expounded by M. Bernet, we can only thank heaven that there were no tables of co-efficients in existence when England was in the making.

All these endeavours to compare things that are

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essentially not comparable are based upon utterly false notions of what war is and of the real forces that are in question and in play. Personal skill, intelligence, character, and, above all, resolution, are the dominating factors in all war, whether waged above or below the earth or the sea. How many of our greatest victories would have been obtained if commanders had worried themselves about tables of co-efficients? Certainly it is the business of governments to take all questions into account, and to place in the hands of army or navy the weapon suited to the work in hand. But the hour of action is not the time for meditation, or for poring over tables pretending to prove by A and B that so many third-class cruisers are superior to a first-class battleship—for that is what the suggestion claims. In battle the personal equation dominates everything, and it is only then, and sometimes, alas! too late, that a nation learns whether its trusted leaders are men of mettle or of straw. M. Bernet does not, indeed, neglect the moral factors, and everything he has to say on this subject is full of good sense, but he does not tell us what we really want to know—namely, the co-efficient of Togo in terms of Russian admirals.

The same writer supplies some valuable information, evidently derived from Russian sources, concerning the entrance channel to Port Arthur and the squadron within the harbour. The present depth in the channel at low water is, he declares, six mètres; consequently the *Novik*, with a draught of 5·70 m., is alone able to leave or enter port at all hours—a fact which explains the constant activity of this cruiser. On the other hand, such ships as the *Pobieda*, *Poltava*, and *Peresviet* draw 8·30 m., and as the mean depth at high water is at present only 8·70 m., it is only during the comparatively brief period of high tide, and only then by day, that the battleships can put to sea. Whether due to the sunken steamers or to natural causes, the channel is extremely narrow, so much so that it takes half an hour for a battleship to leave port. Even by interpolating cruisers

between battleships, as was done on the 23rd, the number of vessels that can go out in one tide is limited. It may be recalled that when the squadron put to sea before war was declared the operation took three days. Even after the first losses it was unable to put to sea at one tide, and can only accomplish this feat to-day in five hours with the utmost difficulty.

These figures, assuming them to be correct, are exceedingly interesting, since they show that Port Arthur labours under the same disadvantages as many tidal harbours belonging to our European neighbours, and we are able for the first time to obtain positive proof of the grave defects of harbours of this character in time of war. To those who have studied these questions the facts are well known, but they are not known to the great body of the public. Warships coming out of tidal harbours can only do so at hours that can be exactly calculated by the enemy. When outside they must depart singly or await the appearance of their consorts. In the first case they can be attacked singly, and in the second they are exposed to the incidents we have witnessed at Port Arthur. If for any cause daylight is considered essential, the darkness may supervene before the squadron is ready to sail, or before the tide serves for return. In any case the ships at anchor are vulnerable to torpedo boats by night and to submarines by day or night. Questions like these are among the practical difficulties of naval warfare and acts of invasion from over-sea, and it is useful that our attention should be directed to them.

CHAPTER XXV¹

EVENTS FROM JUNE 26 TO AUGUST 10

THE recent events at Port Arthur, and the better definition of the situation of the respective combatants in the Kwantung promontory by official, if fragmentary, despatches, enable us to learn something of the position of the attackers and attacked. It is also necessary to trace the operations of the field armies in outline from the hour of their deployment up to the end of July, so that a general glance may be given at the situation in its broadest aspects.

It will be recalled that the Second Army of Japan commenced to land in the Liautung Peninsula on May 5; that the Nanshan lines were carried on May 26 and the general advance upon Port Arthur begun on June 26, the identical date appointed for the main armies to attack the passes of Fenshuiling, Taling, and Motienling and to win the right of entry into the Liau Valley.

For a whole month no definite information as to the progress of the attack on Port Arthur was published by the Japanese Government. We heard the distant echoes of the fighting, and saw, as through a glass darkly, the steady progress of the operations of the Japanese, aiming at the restriction of the zone occupied by General Stössel's troops and the construction of siege batteries on the conquered ground. The Russians published a despatch from the fortress on

¹ From *The Times* of August 15, 1904.

July 16, dealing with operations on the east front during July 3, 4 and 5. A Russian loss of 300 men was admitted, but it was claimed that the Japanese loss was far heavier, and that their intrenchments had been captured. The arrival of strong Japanese reinforcements at Dalny on July 2 was mentioned by General Stössel. These reports were neither confirmed nor denied at Tokio; all we were allowed to know was that Admiral Togo was keeping a close grip of the harbour with his inshore squadron and that his torpedo craft continued to make scouting and mining attacks whenever an opportunity occurred.

On August 7 a very brief despatch from General Stössel, or rather the first instalment of a serial story, was published at St. Petersburg, dealing with important events upon July 26, 27 and 28. The Russian commander claimed that all the Japanese attacks had been beaten back with enormous loss, but he admitted that the garrison had lost forty officers and 1,500 men killed and wounded in the course of these three days. It was not until two days later that the continuation of this despatch was allowed to see the light. Then it was made known that the Japanese had shown 70,000 men and a large number of siege guns during the actions of the 26th and 27th, and that there had been no question of an assault, but only of a series of attacks along the whole investing line. The story of the more decisive operation to which these preliminaries had evidently led up was then unfolded. On July 30, at 4 a.m., while the Russians were still congratulating themselves on their success, the dawning light revealed five divisions of Japanese troops deployed and advancing to the attack of Wolf Hill, which they finally carried and still apparently hold.

The east basin and dock should be secure except from indirect fire from Wolf Hill, but the general effect of the Japanese success on July 30 was to render the inner harbour untenable except at the risk of constant loss by a naval squadron, and, further, to split

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up the defence of the fortress into two halves, enabling the Japanese to observe and punish any transfer of parts of the garrison by day from east to west, or inversely, except under shelter of covered ways. General Stössel tells us that in view of the enormous superiority of the enemy's forces and the weakness of the position, his troops received orders to retire without fighting to the next position—that is to say, to the main line of defence, since none other intervenes. We can well believe General Stössel when he tells us that the retreat was effected in good order and that the accurate fire of artillery completely stopped the Japanese advance, but the pith of the matter is that the Japanese had gained the position they desired and had no immediate intention of advancing further.

The occupation and preparation for defence of Wolf Hill under the close fire of the Russian forts must have been a difficult and costly business for the Japanese. Nevertheless, it seems to have been satisfactorily carried out and siege guns brought up, since Admiral Alexeieff's telegram of the 11th informs us that the port was bombarded with siege guns during the four days August 7 to 10. We have not been informed whether Takushan has been captured on the east front, but, if it has, the Japanese can bring a cross-fire to bear upon all points of refuge of the Russian ships.

The harassed squadron supported the fire for three days and then took a decision, under compulsion, that should have been taken or rather persisted in on June 23 under far more favourable conditions. When Admiral Vithöft put to sea on June 23, Admiral Togo had but four battleships—three, according to the French version of the despatch—to oppose to the Russian six, besides seventeen cruisers and thirty torpedo boats. A week before the sortie of August 10 the Japanese squadron came under Russian observation, and its strength was given at five battleships, four armoured and ten other cruisers, besides forty-eight torpedo craft. On the

Russian side the *Bayan* was also out of action, and probably some of the light flotilla, which were available on June 23, were no longer effective owing to the constant activity of the Japanese destroyers. Thus the chances of success on August 10 were distinctly inferior to those on June 23, and the ships themselves had been exposed for three days to the wearing effects of a bombardment to which they could not reply.

Vithöft, it may be recalled, excused his failure to accept battle on June 23 for one reason, amongst others, that his decision would occasion less loss. That expression he may have lived to regret, and it is difficult not to conclude that the fatal indecision on June 23 was an error fraught with disastrous consequences for the Russian navy. The events of August 10 resembled, up to a certain point, those of June 23. At dawn the Japanese ships on the horizon numbered eleven cruisers and seventeen torpedo boats, but before the difficult operation of passing all the Russian ships through the entrance channel was completed, Admiral Togo, warned in time, was ready, at his usual rendezvous, for the battle which he must have both anticipated and desired. About 11 a.m. the Russians put to sea, and, steering south, encountered the enemy twenty-five miles south-east of Port Arthur.

¹ The morning was fine, with a slight haze and a light southerly breeze. At an early hour a series of wireless messages from the Japanese inshore squadron gave Admiral Togo warning of the Russian sortie and of the course steered by the enemy. Believing that the object of the Russians was to break south, Togo made for Encounter Rock, and was $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles south-east of it by noon, whence he steered west-south-west at a speed of 10 knots. At 12.5 p.m. the Russians were sighted at a distance of 20,000 mètres, and their force ascertained to be six battleships, four cruisers, and eight torpedo

¹ The following account is taken from the letter of the Tokio correspondent of *The Times* dated October 1, 1904.

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craft. The battleships and three cruisers were in line ahead, Vithöft's flagship, the *Tsarevitch*, leading, followed by the *Retvisan*, *Pobieda*, *Peresviet*, *Sevastopol*, *Poltava*, *Askold*, *Diana*, and *Pallada*, in the order named. A hospital ship followed in rear, while the *Novik* and torpedo craft formed another column to port, at the interval of a mile.

The Japanese admiral now manœuvred to draw the enemy into the open sea, changing his formation to line abreast and then again to line ahead, altering his course to south-south-west. At 12.35 p.m. the Russians changed their course slightly eastward, and, steaming at about 18 knots, increased the distance separating the fleets. At 12.58 p.m. Togo formed line abreast, and then, resuming line ahead, steered east-north-east, the Japanese cruisers now leading the line. The Russians gave way, and as they seemed inclined to head back to Port Arthur, Togo, at 1.25 p.m., altered course 16 points, reversing his direction and appearing to evade action.

The Russians once more headed south, and at 2.8 p.m. Togo steered to the eastward, his battleships now heading the line, and at 2.30 the squadrons were within range and opened the first serious fire. The *Askold* was badly hit, and, followed by the other cruisers, left the line and steamed to the port side of the battleships, taking no part in the subsequent action. The fleets were now 8,000 mètres apart, and the Russian fire was mainly concentrated upon Togo's flagship, the *Mikasa*, which led the line. At 3.30 p.m. Togo ceased fire, raised his speed to 17 knots, and edged towards the Russian line. By 5.30 p.m., the two lines being 7,800 to 7,500 mètres apart, the action recommenced, and a little later two armoured cruisers from the west reinforced the Japanese line. At 5.56 p.m. a 12-in. shell struck the *Mikasa*, slightly wounded Prince Fushima, and jammed the turn-table of one of the barbettes, but the damage was quickly repaired.

By 6 p.m. the fleets were 7,000 mètres apart, and the fire became warmer. The *Peresviet* lost two masts,

while a shell bursting forward of the *Mikasa's* bridge struck down a number of officers and men. In reply the Japanese flagship sent a shell which struck near the conning tower of the *Tsarevitch*, killing Admiral Vithöft and several other officers and men. Two other 12-in. shells also struck the *Tsarevitch*; the flagship became unmanageable and left the line, sheering to port. Her consorts followed her, and fell into a confused group, offering a fine target, of which the Japanese fully availed themselves, closing in to 3,500 mètres' range. On the death of Vithöft, the *Tsarevitch* made the signal "the Admiral transfers the command," and the next senior officer, namely, Admiral Prince Ukhtomsky, who was on board the *Peresviet*, assumed control.

At 7 p.m., when the firing of the Russians was perceptibly weakening, a fresh reinforcement of four ships joined Admiral Togo from the north. The Russians were now in disorder, while the Japanese preserved their formation, circling round the mob of Russian ships and causing them loss and damage. At nightfall, or about 8.40 p.m., it was decided to send in the torpedo craft, but the Russian ships were now scattered and sought safety by independent flight, while the freshening wind and rising sea militated against the success of the torpedo. The only initiative Prince Ukhtomsky is known to have displayed on this day was the order given to make the signal "Follow the *Peresviet*," when this ship turned to head for Port Arthur. The damaged state of the Russian ships, their low speed, and the rapid depletion of the ammunition supplies are alleged to have caused the issue of this order.¹

The Japanese had 170 casualties, but their ships sustained no serious damage, and Admiral Togo states that such injuries as they have suffered have been

¹ The best account hitherto published of the naval campaign up to the fall of Port Arthur is that by Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge, G.C.B., in *Brassey's Naval Annual* for 1905.

temporarily repaired. All the information we have concerning the proceedings of the five Russian battleships which held together is that the *Retvisan* and *Pobieda* were sighted from a Japanese look-out station on the morning of the 11th making for Port Arthur, and Admiral Togo states that five battleships in all, and one cruiser, subsequently ascertained to be the *Pallada*, regained such dubious sanctuary as the shell-swept harbour affords. Concerning the Russian losses in action, whether of ships or men, there is no complete information; but there were forty killed and 307 wounded on the six ships that returned to Port Arthur. The action of the various classes of cruisers on each side is at present undefined; but the battleship *Tsarevitch*, together with the cruisers *Askold*, *Novik*, and *Diana*, with several destroyers, all became detached for various reasons during the confusion, and fled to the southward. The *Tsarevitch*, with sixty killed and wounded, besides the *Novik* and some smaller craft, reached Tsingtau, in the German concession of Kiaochau, on the evening of the 11th. Rear-Admiral Matussevitch's account of the share of the *Tsarevitch* in the action is sufficient proof of the severity of the engagement.

The *Askold*, with thirty-four killed and wounded and her guns disabled, arrived at Wusung, and claims to be allowed to dock. The *Diana* reached Saigon. One destroyer reached Chifu, and, after being partially disarmed, was cut out by Japanese destroyers. Another was beached and blown up near Weihaiwei. The plucky little *Novik* steamed out of Tsingtau at 3 a.m. on the 12th before the expiration of her twenty-four hours' grace, and if she can get clear of her pursuers it will be nothing less than she deserves.

It was the Japanese army that shook this somewhat over-ripe fruit into the lap of Admiral Togo. Just as the stunning blow of the first attack on the Russian squadron was the direct effect of the masculine decision of the Japanese Government to take overt action, so in this penultimate act of the naval drama at Port Arthur

the army plays a leading and distinguished part. No navy can have done better than that of Japan during this dogged watch of six months off the shores of the doomed fortress. Yet never at any time has it so much as scratched the walls of Port Arthur, and but for this indispensable weapon of national strategy, a sufficient and highly trained field army, the full fruits of naval victory would undoubtedly never have been gathered. Diplomacy, army, and navy thus stand out as merely artificial divisions of a single dominating purpose, and before this lesson, taught by the close, cordial, and effective co-operation of these three servants of the national will, all else sinks into comparative insignificance.

Immediately following Admiral Togo's victory, his colleague Vice-Admiral Kamimura came to the term of his persistent run of ill-luck.

With the earlier exploits of the Vladivostok squadron we have already dealt. This division suffered a serious loss in the middle of May, when the cruiser *Bogatyr* ran on a rock near Vladivostok and became a total loss. The three remaining cruisers, *Rossia* (flag), *Gromoboi*, and *Rurik* put to sea towards the end of June, and captured the British steamer *Cheltenham*, carrying sleepers to Korea. They were pursued by Kamimura, but escaped under cover of darkness. The torpedo flotilla at Vladivostok made for Gensan at the same time, and destroyed a few small craft and lighters. On July 19 the cruisers again put to sea, being now under the command of Rear-Admiral Yessen. They passed the Tsugaru Straits and cruised off Yokohama from July 23 to 29 without being interfered with. During this foray they sank the British steamer *Knight Commander* and the German steamer *Thea*, making the plea that these vessels were without coal sufficient to take them to a Russian port. They also captured the German steamer *Arabia*, and sank a Japanese coasting steamer and some junks. These exploits caused much disturbance in shipping circles, and are said to have affected the sailings of merchant transport amounting

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to 200,000 tons. The squadron returned to harbour on August 1.

On August 10 the division once more set out under Yessen with the evident purpose of uniting with the Port Arthur ships and of returning with them to Vladivostok.

At dawn on August 14 the *Gromoboi*, *Rossia*, and *Rurik*, coming from Vladivostok and steering south, arrived within forty-two miles of Fusan and thirty from the northern lighthouse of Tsushima. Admiral Kamimura, with the *Idzumo* (flag), *Tokiwa*, *Azuma*, and *Iwate* (flag of Rear-Admiral Misu), was patrolling the straits near Ulsan at the same moment, on a parallel course and six miles to the north.

Immediately the presence of the Japanese was discovered the Russians put about and shaped a course for the open sea to the north-east at seventeen knots, representing full speed. Kamimura at once turned in pursuit, and, thanks to superior speed, engaged the enemy at 5 a.m., at sixty cables' distance. Almost immediately the *Rurik* signalled, "Rudder does not act," whereupon the Russian admiral replied, "Steer with your engines," and continued on his former course. The *Rurik*, however, began to fall behind, and the Japanese, in T-shaped formation, concentrated their fire upon her. Her consorts now endeavoured to protect her and draw Kamimura's fire upon themselves. Fire broke out upon all three Russian ships, and after a short time the *Rurik* was almost silenced and was down in the stern, with a slight list to port. The *Gromoboi* and *Rossia* now abandoned her and took a north-easterly course, while the *Rurik* endeavoured to escape towards the south-east.

At 9.30 a.m. the Japanese fourth squadron, under Admiral Uriu, arrived opportunely on the scene, the *Naniwa* and *Takachiho* engaging the *Rurik*, thus leaving Kamimura free to pursue the *Gromoboi* and *Rossia*. An unequal fight continued for several hours, but at length the two Russian ships succeeded in effect-

ing their escape, very severely damaged, and with a loss of 185 killed and 307 wounded.

Admiral Kamimura returned from the chase because he considered the *Naniwa* and *Takachiho* no match for the *Rurik*, and was anxious as to the result of their attack. Nevertheless, these nineteen-year-old ships, with a total displacement of 7,350 tons, were now a match for the *Rurik* both in speed and other respects. They "enfiladed" her and did heavy execution, so that her fire ceased at noon, when the valves were opened and the ship gradually sank.

On his return, Admiral Kamimura discovered that the ship was sinking, and succeeded in saving 600 lives. It was these men, thus saved, who sank the *Hitachi Maru* and then sailed away from a hundred of their drowning victims. Thus nobly were these victims avenged.

The Japanese loss in this action was forty-six killed and sixty-eight wounded, the heaviest loss falling upon the *Idzumo*.

Turning now to the operations of the field armies, it is known that by June 21 the deployment of the Japanese forces was completed, and that the three armies stood upon a line running north-east from Seunyucheng, south of Kaiping, on the left, through the Chapanling Pass, to a point southward of the Motien defile on the right. The Passes of Fenshuiling, Taling, and the Motien, defended by strong garrisons, destined to serve as a screen behind which Kuropatkin's main army could manœuvre in safety, all fell between June 26 and 30; the superiority of the Japanese in mountain warfare was established, and the entry to the Liau Valley secured.

Of these engagements Fenshuiling stands out as a good example of the tactics of the two armies in mountain warfare, and is therefore worthy of the attention of British officers.

The defence of this position had occupied the Russians for three months. Strong semi-permanent

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forts, with extensive hutting for troops, had been prepared ; covered ways connected the several positions, while every sort of obstacles—pits, wire entanglements, and stockades—had been accumulated in front. There were fourteen battalions holding the position, besides three regiments of Cossacks and thirty guns, and no direct assault could hope to succeed without heavy sacrifice.

After a reconnaissance of the position, General Nodzu distributed his 10th Division and auxiliary troops in three columns, extending over a front of twenty miles. On June 26 the columns under Major-General Asada and Colonel Kamada moved against the eastern and western heights of the defile respectively ; Major-General Marui marched against the right of the position, while an auxiliary column under Major-General Togo was directed against Hsiahata, where there stood a detached body of the enemy consisting of three battalions and eight guns.

The auxiliary column fought all the day of the 26th, and finally captured Hsiahata before dawn on the 27th. Major-General Marui co-operated in this attack with his left ; the rest of his troops, advancing westward, drove away two Russian battalions, and established themselves on the right rear of the Fenshuiling position. The Asada and Kamada columns gained the slopes of the front of the position, while these batteries opened fire between 5 and 7 a.m. on June 27. Finding himself unable to make progress to the front, General Asada detached a regiment to his extreme right, and this double turning movement disheartened the Russians, who ceased fire at 7.50 a.m. and began a general retreat at 8 a.m. Thereupon Asada's engineers cleared away the obstacles, and the troops reached the summit of the eastern heights of the defile at 11 a.m. Here they brought guns into action against the retreating enemy, who, after destroying his stores, withdrew to Tomucheng with a loss of some 600 men. An attempt to recapture the position in the afternoon completely

failed, and the defenders were finally driven off at 7.30 p.m.

Concerning the captures of the Motien and Ta Passes by General Kuroki's troops, official reports are wanting ; but with respect to the famous Motien Pass, it would appear that General Kuroki, by a succession of marches, counter-marches, and feigned retreats, completely deceived his enemy, and not only turned the pass, but won it without any serious loss, the attention of the defenders having been distracted by feints.

On July 6 Marshal Oyama left Tokio for the front, and upon the same day the advance of the armies was resumed. Kaiping was occupied on the 9th by the Second Army, and all design of a counter-offensive by the Russians prevented by the parallel march of the Fourth, or Takushan, Army on its right driving back Zarubaieff's Siberians.

Everything pointed to a general action at Tashih-chiao, which had been strongly fortified and was defended by 48 battalions, 50 squadrons, and 105 guns, in all over 60,000 men.

But before Kuropatkin accepted battle at Tashih-chiao it was necessary for him to be assured that Kuroki was planning no mischief at the Motienling. The Russian information on this subject was inadequate, and also contradictory, and it was therefore decided to send General Count Keller with the equivalent of two Russian divisions, made up from the 3rd, 6th, and 9th East Siberian Rifle Divisions, to test the strength of the Japanese. Count Keller was instructed¹ not to start with the object of capturing the pass, but to act according to the strength of the forces he found opposed to him.

The left column of 14 battalions and 12 guns, under Major-General Kashtalinsky, was directed upon the Hsiakaoling Pass and Wufengkwan ; the right, of one battalion, upon Hsinkialing to cover the right, while the reserve was posted eastward of Tawan.

At 11 p.m. on July 16 the leading Russian battalion

¹ Kuropatkin's telegram of July 17.

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dislodged a Japanese outpost from Makumenza and gave the alarm. The Japanese force holding the position consisted of a single brigade, the 15th of the 2nd Division, under Major-General Okazaki, and upon the first notice of danger these troops were assembled at the appointed positions, the artillery occupying the heights north-west of Wufengkwan. At dawn the Russians occupied Hsiakaoling and a height to the south, pressing back the Japanese outposts to the main positions. Soon after 5 a.m. on July 17 Kashtalinsky endeavoured to occupy the Wufengkwan position and the bluffs to the south, sending forward first one and then three battalions; but the attempt failed, notwithstanding the support of a horsed mountain battery, as the Russian field guns were unable to come into action owing to the nature of the ground.

While this fight was in progress the Japanese outpost at Makumenza, which had been driven in, was reinforced, and held its ground against three Russian battalions opposing it. A Japanese detachment two miles east of Hsiakaoling was also attacked by a Russian regiment, but held firm. Immediately to the north of Hsiamatang a Russian battalion and a squadron attacked a single Japanese company on outpost, and a furious fight ensued, all the Japanese officers being killed or wounded. At Hsuchiaputz two Russian battalions and a troop of cavalry also attacked another Japanese post. Thus between 8 and 9 a.m. the whole of the Japanese line was assailed on a broad front by greatly superior numbers.

The Japanese front had been lightly held, but the Russians were unable to profit by their numerical superiority, and now the Japanese reinforcements began to reach the threatened points. General Count Keller, who directed the fight from the Russian centre, was compelled to employ part of his reserves to strengthen the first line, but his positions were untenable, and at 10.30 a.m. he decided to withdraw, "as the strength of the enemy was so great compared with ours." The





Japanese line, reinforced at all points, started in pursuit. The main Russian force retreated towards Tawan and Tenshuitien in excellent order. Some battalions halted near Kinkiapaotsz, and here four Russian guns came into action, and the Japanese pursuit ceased at the western end of the village. The outpost at Makumenza fired heavily upon the retreating Russians in its front; the Hsiakaoling post joined in the pursuit, while the hard-pressed Hsiamatang outpost, on receiving help, drove the Russians northward at 4.50 p.m. Earlier in the day the Russians who had assailed the Hsuchiaputz outpost also retired to the north-west. The Japanese loss in this fight was 299 of all ranks, while Count Keller reported that his losses exceeded 1,000.

During the 17th and 18th Kuroki followed up this success by turning the Russians out of Hsihoyen with his 12th Division, encountering for the first time the Western troops of the 10th Army Corps, who fared no better than the East Siberians, despite the fact that regiments which had won fame at the Shipka Pass were employed. Kuroki, however, was not Suleiman, and that made all the difference in the world. The Japanese losses in this action were 522, and that of the Russians about double that number.

By this time the greater part of the 10th and 17th Army Corps had reached Kuropatkin, who was planning a fresh onslaught upon the First Army, when, suddenly, the Second and Fourth Armies broke camp and surged up from the south.

Zarubaieff's position at Tashihchiao was a strong one. It extended along the range of heights from Ninsinshan to Tapingling; the field of fire to the front was wide, and throughout the line entrenchments had been prepared in several lines, with loopholes and overhead cover, while abatis, wire entanglements, and mines presented serious obstacles to an assailant. It was, however, open to attack from the mountain country to the eastward, and the fall of Fenshuiling had laid bare the position on this side.

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General Oku deployed in front of this formidable position on July 24, and endeavoured, without much success, to find positions for his guns, which were outranged and outfought by the Russian artillery. The advance of the Japanese infantry, under these conditions, was difficult and slow. Little progress was made by nightfall, when the firing ceased. The commander on the Japanese right now determined to make a night attack, and at 10 p.m. his infantry rushed the trenches at Tapingling, and by 3 a.m. on the morning of July 25 occupied the whole of the Russian position on this side. The rest of the Japanese line conformed with this movement, Shansitou was occupied, and the Japanese artillery at Wolungkung opened fire at dawn.

But the Japanese attack had struck but rear-guards, since Zarubaieff had begun to retreat overnight. This retirement was apparently caused by the receipt of a message from Kuropatkin warning his lieutenant that his right would be threatened from Yingkow and his left from the hills. "The position was abandoned," says General Sakharoff, "because the officer commanding did not deem it possible to accept battle the next morning while defending a position with a front of 16 kilomètres." The retreat provoked annoyance and discouragement among the troops, and when the Russian rear-guard passed through Tashihchiao at 11 a.m., cannonaded by the enemy's artillery, a bad impression was caused.

On the night of the 26th the Japanese occupied Yingkow, and obtained a valuable advanced base for their armies.

On July 31 all three armies made a concerted advance. The Second Army drove the Russian rear-guards into Haicheng. At Tomucheng, fifteen miles south-east of Haicheng, the Fourth Army encountered the 5th Siberian and another division with seven batteries, all troops not previously engaged, and defeated them with a loss to the Russians of 700 killed and six guns abandoned.





This second victory of General Nodzu's Fourth, or so-called Takushan Army, was won under circumstances of some difficulty. General Alexeieff, commanding the Russian force, had constructed strong defensive works from Hungyaoling on his left through Changsanku to Sanchiaoshan and the heights to the east of it. On July 30 the Japanese troops were deployed on the hills south of Kinchiaoputz and Tomucheng, and at dawn on July 31 an attack began on the Russians eastward of Sanchiaoshan, while the Japanese left assailed the defenders of the hills north of Yangshuho (East and West). By 8 a.m. a lodgment was made on a height north-east of East Yangshuho. Near the road to Haicheng the Russians were in force, with twenty-one guns in position, and when, at 10.30 a.m., the Japanese gained the heights they were unable to make headway against the heavy fire from Changsanku.

The Russians now moved forward to make a counter-attack, but were driven back with heavy loss, and the opponents bivouacked in this part of the field within rifle shot, neither side being able to advance. Later in the evening the success of the Japanese left caused the whole Russian line to fall back upon Haicheng.

The First Army, taking time by the forelock, also assailed the Russians in their front before the projected offensive of the enemy on this side was under way. On July 31 and August 1 the right of the First Army at Yushulintz, south of the Taitse River, and the centre at Yangtzuling, west of the Motien Pass, attacked the Russians, and after two days of bitter and hotly contested fighting under a blazing sun, and notwithstanding great difficulties of ground, drove them out of their positions.

Kuroki's action was compulsory on account of the increase of the Russian numbers in his front and the threatening character of their operations. He therefore set his army in motion on the night of July 30, with the intention of striking before his enemy's preparations were completed.

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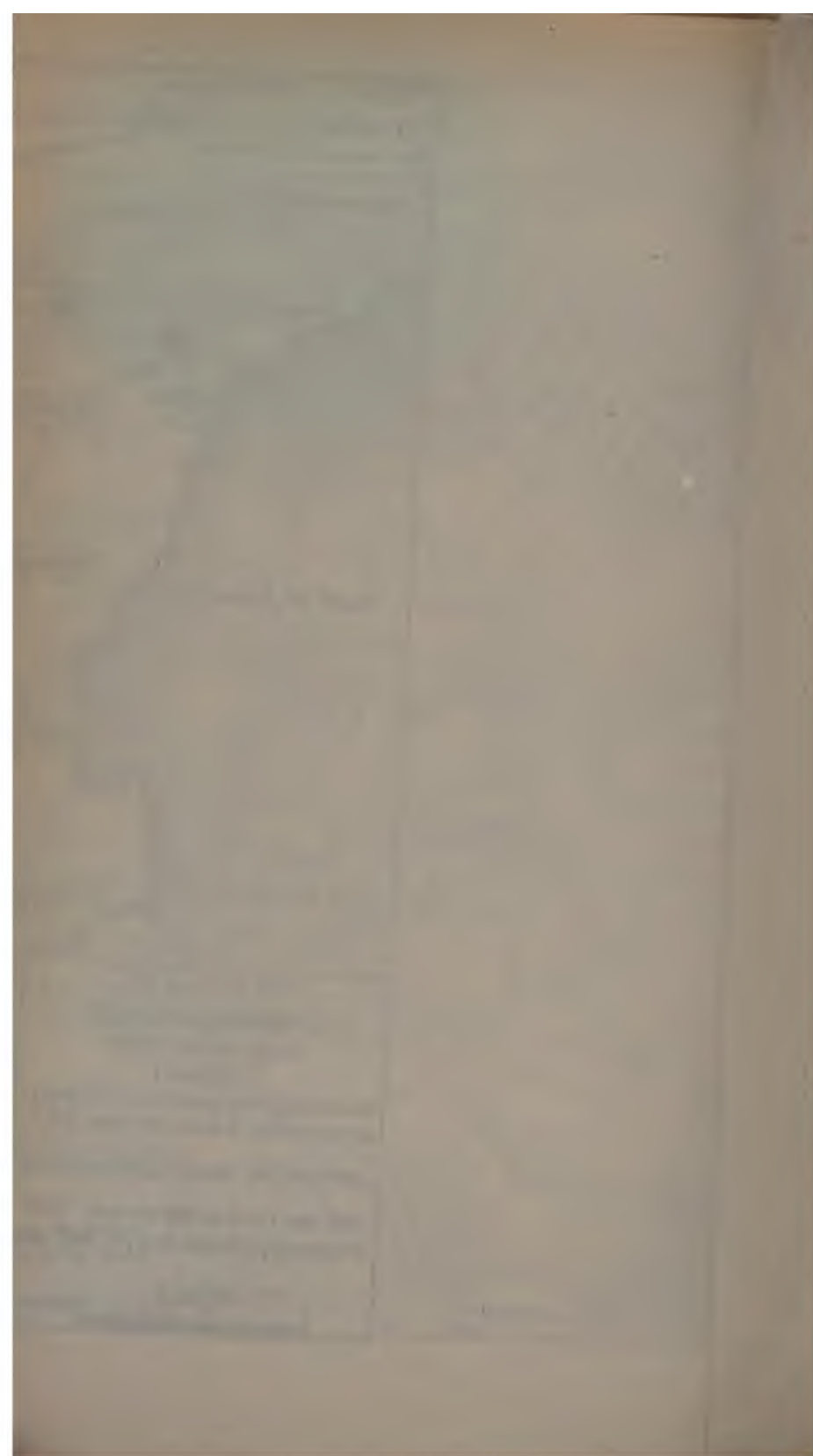
At dawn on July 31 the right column, or 12th Division, attacked the Russians at Yushulintz, while the left, or 2nd Division, attacked Yangtzuling, sending a detachment to co-operate with the right column. At Yushulintz there were the 31st and 35th Russian Divisions, a brigade of the 9th Division, and four batteries; at Yangtzuling the 3rd and 6th Divisions, a brigade of the 9th, and four batteries. The steep hills and deep valleys offered serious obstacles to the Japanese, while the Russians had made skilful use of the ground and had fortified all important points with trenches and closed works.

The right column first placed three battalions of infantry about Laomuling in order to prevent danger from the side of Penhsihu; the rest of the troops moved out to attack in two columns. At dawn the right wing attacked the enemy's front and left flank, occupying a height 2,000 yards from his main position, which was on the western slopes of the Yushulintz heights. After furious fighting the position was occupied by 8.50 a.m., and here the Japanese right wing awaited the operations of its co-operating troops, while repulsing several counter-attacks.

The left wing of the right column found the Russians in position at Pienling, and at 6.35 a.m. drove in the enemy after heavy fighting. The Hsiamatang detachment from the left column attacked and defeated at 8 a.m. a Russian battalion at Taiyobarai. Pressing on, this detachment found itself on the flank of three Russian regiments with four guns retiring from Pienling, and at once poured a hot fire into them at ranges of 200 to 1,000 yards, putting them to flight with heavy loss.

The centre of the Russian position on the heights south of Yushulintz appears to have held firm during the day of July 31, and endeavours made to turn its right failed owing to difficulties of ground. At dawn on August 1 this part of the Russian forces was also withdrawn; the Japanese right wing then pressed on and occupied Laoling by 9.40 a.m.; the left wing observed





the retreat, but was unable to interfere with it owing to topographical difficulties; the Hsiamatang detachment drove the enemy from a height south of Lapu, and occupied the heights to the west of it by 1 p.m.

Meanwhile the 2nd Division had been engaged with Keller's force at Yangtzuling. Advancing by night the right wing had driven in the enemy's advanced posts and had occupied the heights east of Tawan by 3 a.m. on July 31. All the other troops reached the positions assigned to them except the artillery, which, owing to the rugged nature of the ground, was only able to place two batteries in position at dawn; it was not before 11 a.m. that the remainder of the guns were man-handled into action.

The left wing of the 2nd Division advanced upon Makumenza, while a detachment moved off to turn the enemy's right. The dominating position of the Russian guns, and the difficulties under which the Japanese artillery laboured, prevented effective employment of the troops, and the frontal attack made very slow progress. In the afternoon, towards 4 p.m., the infantry on the right and left made headway, but no assault could be delivered, and the troops bivouacked in position as they stood. At dawn on August 1 both right and left wings renewed their attacks and finally occupied all the heights between 7 and 8 a.m.

In these arduous operations the Japanese First Army lost 946 killed and wounded. The Russian loss was estimated at 2,000 men; 2 Russian guns were captured, besides 500 rifles and 157 prisoners. The commander of the Russian forces, General Count Keller, died a soldier's death; he was struck by the burst of a shrapnel at 3 p.m. on July 31, and fell covered with many wounds.

The official accounts of these two important actions disclosed the fact that the First Army had met and defeated the whole of the 10th Army Corps, half the 17th Army Corps, besides two divisions of East Siberian troops. Thus, on August 1 not a single unit remained

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to Kuropatkin that had not been involved in serious defeat.

These disasters necessarily entailed a Russian concentration at Liauyang, where Kuropatkin managed to collect his army on August 3; and on the same day General Oku occupied Haicheng and Niuchwang unopposed, throwing forward his outposts during succeeding days some ten miles to the north.

The separation of Kuropatkin's forces, and the successive defeats and retreats of its detachments which naturally followed, greatly diminished the military value of the Army of Manchuria.

Kuropatkin might have united his forces at Liauyang as soon as the state of the weather allowed after the loss of his positions in the mountains on June 27, their strength undiminished and their spirit unimpaired. Blind to the dictates of prudence and common sense, he engaged in discursive and indiscriminate fighting over a wide front, and in all these actions not a ray of military instinct or inspiration, or any dominant or presiding idea, emerged to illumine the scene of gloom. If, owing to the modest pretensions of Japanese strategy at this stage, and the apparent belief that the Chinese precedent would be continued by the Russians to the end of the chapter, Kuropatkin was shepherded and driven into concentration at last, it was against his will, and with the loss of some 6,000 men and several guns. Constant retreats and the abandonment of strongly intrenched positions after half-hearted resistance do not encourage armies, nor are they, as a rule, the prelude to victory. There is such a thing as the tradition of defeat, and unenviable is the army that creates it.

Since the land campaign opened the Japanese army has lost 12,000 killed and wounded; four men have been wounded for every man killed. The Russian losses have not been honestly admitted, and we are forced to calculate them on the basis of Russian dead buried by the Japanese, allowing for wounded

rather under the above proportion. In fifteen engagements, large and small, which have occurred since the opening of the war—all of them Russian defeats—the calculation works out to a Russian loss of 32,500 killed and wounded, besides 113 light siege and field and 18 machine-guns captured by the enemy. Excluding the Port Arthur garrison, we have to deduct 28,000 men as the casualties of the army under Kuropatkin's direct and personal command. It is not our business to disclose the Japanese numbers, even if we know them, and we need only note the figure given by the Operations Bureau of the Russian War Office—namely, 220,000 men and 600 guns for the field armies, and 100,000 men besieging Port Arthur. If this be correct, as we need neither affirm nor deny, it would be interesting to learn how General Sakharoff, Minister of War, has explained to his Imperial master the belief he expressed in March last, that the Japanese could only place 200,000 men in the field at the outside, and that the reserve troops included in this figure were without value. The recent fighting of all three Japanese armies has, however, brought out one point upon which we have had occasion to sound a warning note both before the war and during the flood tide of Japanese victories—namely, the superiority of the Russian quick-firing field gun in range, weight, and rapidity of fire. It is not improbable that the Japanese may desire to bring up their howitzers, in full strength, before confronting a general action, and they will be wise to do so.

As to whether Kuropatkin will fight at Liauyang or retire, the evidence is too contradictory to authorise an expression of opinion. Oyama, we can be sure, is well informed, since the situation of his armies now allows the reports of his spies to come through regularly by many channels not previously open. So long as the Japanese armies stand fast we have the best proof open to us that the Russian army means to fight.

The Chinese—a simple folk—are telling the Russians that Japanese regiments are leaving for Port Arthur,

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and the report seems to be believed. That, of course, is possible, and so is the transfer of two Japanese divisions from Port Arthur to Haicheng, on loan for a battle. But any one who believes that Japanese troops of the field armies, now in touch with the enemy throughout their front, are hurrying away to conclude a siege where there is no immediate occasion for haste, on the eve of a decisive battle at Liauyang, which may decide the fate of East Asia and change the face of the world, is in a condition of mind to believe anything.

CHAPTER XXVI¹

THE SITUATION IN MID-AUGUST

WE have at last reached the crisis of the great campaign in Manchuria, and decisive operations are impending.

The generally favourable situation of the armed forces of Japan after six months of war, and the almost universal sympathy displayed for her cause in the Anglo-Saxon world, need not blind us to the fact that the task before her is still sufficiently arduous, even if we look no further for the moment than this first campaign.

A powerful if battered section of the Pacific squadron still remains an uncertain menace to the Japanese navy; the two best cruisers of the Vladivostok division have been most unaccountably permitted to escape; in neutral ports there are other warships in a situation not entirely determinate; there is the fresh annoyance of these new *Alabamas*, made in Germany, that have taken post off the Straits of Gibraltar, while behind them, for what it is worth, is the Baltic fleet. Port Arthur, with all its outworks lost, still flings defiance at the besieging army, and the hardest part of the attack has still to come—namely, the subjugation by fire of the artillery in the main line of works, followed by the assault. Lastly, the field army under General Kuropatkin, though badly beaten upon many

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of July 20 and 30, August 22 and 29, and September 1, 1904.

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a stricken field, is concentrated at last and apparently strong in numbers and in a humour to stand and fight to a finish.

These three great tasks of the Mikado's forces may suitably be considered one by one so that the resulting situation may be broadly reviewed.

All the Russian ships that left Port Arthur on August 10 are now satisfactorily accounted for. The result of the sortie was to deprive the Pacific squadron of the services of one first-class battleship, three cruisers, and five destroyers or torpedo boats, and to leave Rear-Admiral Prince Ukhtomsky with only five battleships, the injured *Bayan*, and the cruiser *Pallada*. Three destroyers also returned to port. The loss of the gunboat *Otvajni* on August 18, the disablement of the battleship *Sevastopol* on August 23, and the sinking of another destroyer on August 24, further reduced the strength of the Russian naval force. All these latter disasters were caused by mines, with which the approaches to the harbour have been thickly strewn.

Admiral Togo, it will be recalled, considered that five out of the six Russian battleships that faced him on August 10 were severely injured. The *Sevastopol* may have been the ship that suffered least. She is now apparently even in a worse plight than the rest, since, after striking the mine on August 23, she was towed home with a heavy list to starboard and with her bows awash. Prince Ukhtomsky states in his undated report from Port Arthur that his ships are being repaired. In his own ship, the *Peresviet*, he says that the armament, hull, and electric machinery were seriously damaged.

The activity of the Russian counter-mining flotilla is taken at Tokio to presage another attempt to escape. This may be the case, since the Tsar's order that no ships were to return to Port Arthur seems to have been peremptory, and was brought to the particular notice of the squadron in Vithöft's last signal. In view of all the circumstances, however, any successful

combat, or even evasion, must now be reckoned as most improbable.

Meanwhile the Baltic armada is supposed to have put to sea for a cruise, and the progress of the squadron eastward, should it become a fact, will arouse keen interest in all parts of the world.

The precise composition of this armada is not yet announced, but some little time ago a Russian naval engineer, writing in a Kronstadt paper, assumed, perhaps for the sake of argument, that it would include six battleships and six cruisers. He declared that the Suez Canal was the only possible route, and that the voyage would take 63 days, stoppages included. The 12 warships would, he estimated, require 62,328 tons of coal during the voyage, or, after deducting the fuel in the bunkers at starting, 51,583 tons to be provided by colliers. If coaling at sea became necessary, he thought that a further delay would occur, bringing up the length of the voyage to 84 days. The *Echo de Paris* tells us that the Cape route has been selected, and in this case the behaviour of the armada on the stage between Las Palmas and Zanzibar will arouse considerable interest.

It is certainly prudent of Russia to have provided her colliers in advance, and to have mastered the difficult art of coaling at sea, for the aid she will receive from British coaling stations will necessarily be small. A recent proclamation of the Governor of Malta will perhaps make clear to Russia that we have no intention whatever of permitting our harbours to be used for the purpose of belligerent operations, whether by squadrons, single warships, or colliers. They will "not be permitted to make use of any port, roadstead, or waters subject to the jurisdiction of His Majesty for the purpose of coaling, either directly from the shore, or from colliers accompanying such fleet."

To the policy expressed in this proclamation, Russia, with her great concern for the infraction of neutral rights at Chifu, and with her declaration of coal as

unconditional contraband, is naturally the last Power in the world with any right to take exception.

In addition to this armada there have sailed from Russian ports a number of commerce-raiders, and the preparations made for the cruise of these latter vessels particularly deserve our close attention. The proceedings of the *Peterburg* and *Smolensk* stand in a category apart. These vessels passed the Bosphorus between July 4 and 6; they seized the P. and O. steamship *Malacca* on July 13, and on July 20 the immediate release of this ship was demanded.

The news that the *Malacca* was returning through the Suez Canal with a Russian prize crew on board and under the Russian naval flag was calculated to place the temper of the British public under a somewhat severe strain. The reply of the Russian Government to the German protest against the seizure of the mails on the *Prinz Heinrich* amounted to a bland confession of ignorance, while of regret or disavowal there was not a word. If Russian naval commanders during a maritime war intend to frame their own International codes of laws, and act upon them as they choose, while their government professes not even so much as mild surprise, it devolves upon the interests injured to protect themselves.

But can we really believe that there is such an absolute paralysis of law and order at St. Petersburg, and that these vessels, so recently despatched from Russian ports, are not acting upon definite instructions? There is certainly a *prima facie* case for believing that the Russians, who are not tyros in these matters, and are thoroughly aware of the unassailable position we hold, must have entirely realised all the consequences of their acts.

We do not wish to take advantage of Russia's misfortunes, and still less to do anything to lessen the traditional rights of belligerents during a maritime war, but *est modus in rebus*, and if the "ban of Europe," of which Sir William Vernon Harcourt once spoke, is

insufficient to compel the strict observance of treaties, then some other and more effective means must be substituted.

Whilst there is every reason to hope that the Russian Government will make full and prompt reparation for the seizure of the *Malaccu* and other British ships unlawfully arrested or detained in the Red Sea, as well as for so outrageous an incident as the sinking of the *Knight Commander*, it is well to remember that other, and still more serious, because much more intricate, problems still await solution in relation to Russia's pretensions on the subject of contraband, and also concerning the dubious legality and more than dubious justice of the decisions of Russian Prize Courts.

If Russia carries her claims in these matters to their logical consequence, the only possible result will be the dislocation of the shipping trade of the world, and within the confines of an oceanic empire the free course of mercantile transactions is the first interest of all. The decision of a Russian Prize Court cannot in any way add to or subtract from the rights of neutrals, and, should appeals go against the British owners, it will be indispensable that the whole of the proceedings shall be reviewed by diplomatic means and deliberate conclusions formulated. If Russian statesmen have been aroused to the sense of the dangerous course of action upon which their seamen have embarked, they will be wise to modify their programme. They have, or shortly will have, a considerable number of vessels afloat obviously designed for no other purpose than the war against commerce.

There are limits to the strain which patience can endure should the activities of these vessels lead to unreasonable disturbance of sea-going trade, and if the Grand Duke Alexis and his advisers desire to escape a serious calamity they will do well to consult M. de Martens and to revise the instructions issued to the commanders of the commerce-raiders. History shows that pretensions tending to embarrass and annoy the

trade of neutrals are inevitably limited, when pushed to extremes, by the power of the belligerent to enforce them. In Russia's case there is no such power, and the measure of her depredations must be the limits of patience of the neutral Powers whose trade is practically the only sufferer from these acts. As reasonable men, the authors of this new programme are also entitled to ask themselves what they expect to gain at the cost of incurring the ill-will of the world. Has any single advantage been gained for Russia by the war against neutral commerce? Has it arrested the course of Japanese armies or impeded the action of Japanese fleets? Has it, in short, done anything save run up a heavy bill of damages which Russia will have to pay?

It is contended (August 29) that the Russian ships are still without the orders issued in conformity with the assurances given to Great Britain. The procedure of communicating these orders by the intermediary of British cruisers may have become imperative, but is certainly unpleasant; and we must hope that steps have been taken to place the authoritative character of this unusual intervention beyond all possible danger of misunderstanding, whether by the communication of the orders in Russian cipher or by such other means as may have commended themselves. Our Russian friends will not fail to notice that our naval preparations bear no relation to any state of crisis, still less of war. There was no cruiser at Port Said when the *Malacca* sailed west under the Russian flag; there were no ships to protect our interests in the Red Sea; there was no observation, such as common prudence seemed to demand, of the course taken by the *Peterburg* and *Smolensk* when they left the scene of their little illicit depredations; and there were no cruisers ready for service at the Cape, save the old slow and small *Barrosa*, when the *Smolensk* suddenly appeared out of space and stopped the steamship *Comedian* eighty miles from East London and ten miles from shore. A more touching and convincing proof of our profound belief

in the sincerity of Russian assurances we could hardly offer.

If the wandering truants could be warned of the chase and would enter into the spirit of the game, they would lead their pursuers a merry dance, since they have the legs of them all. On the Cape station, or rather at the Cape itself, there are available only the *Barrosa*, a 16-knot third-class cruiser, and the 18-knot gunboat *Partridge*. The chance of catching the 20-knot *Smolensk* with such slow craft, if she did not wish to be caught, would be small indeed. The Admiralty have informed us that there are other vessels engaged upon this curious quest—the *Crescent*, *Forte*, and *Pearl*, which left the Seychelles on August 26, and the *St. George* and *Brilliant* at St. Vincent, Cape Verd. The first-named group of ships was 3,000 miles from the scene of the *Smolensk's* last exploit, near East London, while the *St. George* and her consort were more than 4,000 miles away, and the commodore commanding on the South Atlantic station will hardly invade the extensive domain of the naval Commander-in-Chief at the Cape. What these cruisers would do if called upon to chase such ships as some of the German ocean greyhounds no one can tell.

No doubt ours are peace arrangements, but wars come suddenly nowadays, and the greatest damage is generally effected during the first days of a war, when one side or the other is found unprepared. The damage that could be effected in a short time by the eight Russian auxiliary cruisers and nondescripts now at sea during the time we were completing our preparations to intercept them would probably be very great. If, in the present instance, all may be expected to pass off with the greatest cordiality on both sides—the *Smolensk* slowing down to allow the *Partridge* to catch her—it is difficult to see the precise national value attaching to slow and small cruisers, or what particular function they fulfil in naval strategy. Slow cruisers, like weak, under-gunned battleships, and armed men restricted to

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service at home, are all in the category of what the French call *poussière militaire*. They cost money and are of no use.¹

The pirates from the Black Sea aside, there are still other ships that require to be traced and to have their proceedings observed. Five steamers at least of the North-German Lloyd and Hamburg-American lines have been recently purchased by Russia from Germany and converted into auxiliary cruisers. They are the *Ural* (ex-*Kaiserin Maria Theresia*), and the *Fürst Bismarck*, *Belgia*, *Augusta Victoria*, and *Columbia*. The *Ural* and one of her consorts, renamed the *Don*, took station to the west of the Straits of Gibraltar, and began a blockade at the western end of the Mediterranean, stopping British steamers, and apparently British steamers exclusively. On August 18 the *Ural* was at Vigo coaling, but the *Don* has not been recently reported. Three other converted German liners are said to be at Las Palmas, where they coaled from the German steamer *Valesia* on August 24 or 25. The *Valesia*, as our Cardiff correspondent informed us on Saturday, left Barry for Las Palmas on August 10 with 2,600 tons of smokeless steam coal, and since that date German merchants have secured between 60,000 and 80,000 tons more coal for the service of the Russian navy. A sixth auxiliary cruiser of the America packet type passed Korsör on August 24, and is doubtless intended for the same duty as her consorts.

The Prime Minister has stated that, in the opinion of the law officers and the government, merchant ships may be sold by neutrals to any government, and that such government may turn those ships into cruisers if it likes. Whether this would hold good provided it could be proved that the destination of such ships was for warlike purposes, and that such destination was known to the seller at the time of the transaction, may

¹ Since this was written our naval policy and the distribution of the fleet have been profoundly altered, and not before the change was needed.

be open to serious doubt. The fact remains that this opinion has been expressed, and that it remains for Japan to take corresponding measures if she so desires.

It is certainly to be hoped that the plain speaking by the British and American Ambassadors at St. Petersburg will have caused the commanders of the ex-German liners to be warned of our settled convictions upon questions of contraband and of the sinking of neutral ships. In the present state of opinion, and after all that has passed, any further excesses must not come under the notice of Sir Charles Hardinge, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, for adjustment. In view of the fact that we have as yet absolutely no written assurance that Russia accepts our reading of international law in these matters, it will be necessary for the Admiralty so to dispose of our ships on various stations that we may no longer be found unprepared.¹ No doubt we desire to safeguard the customary rights of belligerents, but the Prime Minister appears to forget that in the past our object has mainly been to destroy the trade of our enemy, whereas now, whether as belligerent or neutral, our chief task is to protect our own. It is by no means the same thing, and it is useless to live in the past when the whole circumstances have so greatly changed.

Details of the naval actions of August 10 and 14 slowly trickle in, but it may not be for many weeks that full and correct information concerning these most important engagements is before us. Certain principal lessons appear, however, to emerge even from the necessarily incomplete accounts that have yet reached us. In the action of August 10 the battleship dominates the whole situation throughout. The nature of the contest during the past six months may have caused other classes of ships to have assumed greater apparent importance from time to time, but the battleship has always given the law, even when it has not been actively engaged. All the mining and torpedo

¹ This was not done, *vide* Chapter XXXV.

attacks, not less than the deeds of the commerce-raiders, have been directly due to the supremacy of the Japanese battleships, which has compelled the enemy to restrict himself to operations more properly belonging to the *défense mobile* of war harbours, or to resort to methods of evasion to prosecute subsidiary methods of attack.

When, at last, the giants came out and gave battle, the other classes of warships resumed at once the very secondary place which they legitimately hold in fleet actions. The Russian cruisers fled and scattered; the fastest escaped; the eight destroyers kept out of harm's way and took no share in the action at all. The action of the second- and third-class Japanese cruisers appears to have been modest, and they failed to prevent the escape of three important hostile cruisers. Even the large torpedo flotilla with Admiral Togo would not appear to have effected anything serious against the five damaged battleships overtaken by darkness at a distance from port. All that they claimed as their prey is the *Pallada*, and even that claim has not been substantiated.¹

The onus of battle thus fell upon the great ships, and everything else afloat reverted to a very subsidiary place. The Russians had six battleships to the Japanese five, and though the balance was redressed by the armoured cruisers, the fight began not too unequal. What gave Japan the victory? In a word, training. Speed may have exercised some influence upon the decision, and leading, no doubt, much. But it was superior gunnery and rapid, accurate fire that decided the day. Those three 12-in. shells that struck the *Tsarevitch* within a few minutes of each other wrecked the Russian line of battle. The flagship was no longer under control, and, worst of all, the death of Admiral Vithöft deprived the line of guidance. The supremacy of the gun, and of the heaviest gun most of all, becomes overwhelmingly manifest.

¹ The *Pallada* returned to Port Arthur.



ADMIRAL HEIHACHIRO TŌGŌ

It is the same story in the action of August 14. The poor *Rurik* was shot to pieces, and her two consorts lost 442 killed and wounded; they were badly damaged and set on fire several times. No one acquainted with the construction of the *Rossia* and *Rurik* can well have expected any other result. In both actions the Japanese ships suffered no serious harm, and their losses were slight compared with those of the enemy. No other weapon but the gun played any part in either action. The little *Novik*, meanwhile, has met with a worse fate than she deserved. Sighted on August 20 by that useful sleuth-hound the *Tsushima*, she was attacked by that cruiser outside Korsakovsk in Sakhalin at 4.30 p.m. and badly damaged; she withdrew to the anchorage enveloped in white smoke. The *Tsushima* was also hit and had a bad list, and was compelled to send a wireless telegram to the *Chitose* for help. At daybreak on August 21 the *Chitose* arrived and found the *Novik* beached and her crew in the course of abandoning her. Thus all the ships which escaped after the action of August 10 are now accounted for.

Presumably the *Tsarevitch* and her three torpedo satellites are out of action at Tsingtau for the rest of the war. The recent visit of a Japanese admiral to the German governor may have made this point clear; it is not at all clear in the accounts that come from Tsingtau, and an explicit official announcement of German intentions is desirable, the *Kölnische Zeitung* notwithstanding. At Shanghai we must assume, despite the somewhat alarmist telegrams from that port, that after the customary delays of the Mandarins the *Askold* and her attendant destroyer will share the fate of the *Mandjur*.¹ No sufficient justification of the cutting-out of the *Reshitelni* at Chifu has yet been forthcoming, and the action is certainly to be regretted. Two wrongs do not make a right, and the scant regard for the rights and interests of neutral Powers displayed by

¹ The *Mandjur*, a Russian gunboat, was at Shanghai when war broke out; after a long delay she was disarmed and interned.

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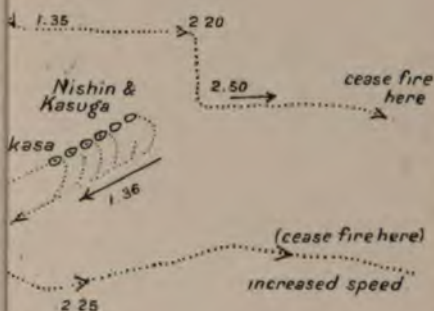
Russia throughout the war should not have induced Japan to depart from the admirable policy of moderation and prudence that has hitherto shed additional lustre upon her success in arms.

During the night preceding the naval action in the Yellow Sea the Japanese captured two important positions opposite the eastern front of Port Arthur—namely, Takushan and Siaokushan. The former stands at an elevation of 645 feet, and is exactly a mile from the main line of Russian forts and three miles from the dock in the inner harbour. Siao or Shahkushan lies about a mile further south; it is 450 feet high, and its western crest is only 1,300 yards from the Russian forts, and 4,400 yards from the dock. The line of hills upon which stand the Russian forts, facing these captured positions, averages from 500 to 550 feet in height, though two dominating peaks in rear are respectively 626 and 650 feet high.

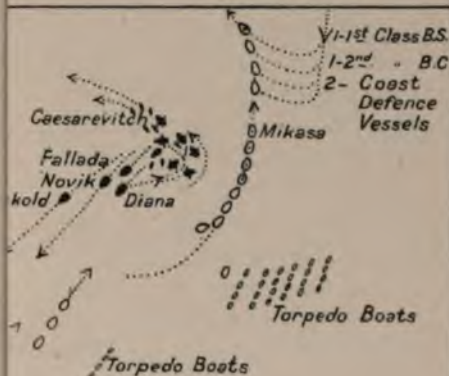
If Wolf Hill is still in Japanese hands and the siege works there have been rapidly extended to right and left, the grasp of General Nogi upon the north and east fronts of the fortress will have become very close, and the whole of the Russian defences, together with the town, dockyard, and inner anchorage, will be within medium and very effective range of Japanese guns.

The situation of the five battleships and smaller craft left at Port Arthur is thus critical, for we know that the earlier Japanese bombardment between August 7 and 9 was the determining cause of the naval sortie, and that the captain of the *Retvisan* was wounded by this fire. The danger will now be increased, and the situation of Prince Ukhtomsky is far from enviable. If it be true that the Tsar ordered the squadron not to return to Port Arthur, the Russian rear-admiral is bound to make another attempt to escape if he can, with any ships that can put to sea. Judging by the damage done to other Russian vessels during the action, it is probable that some, at least, of Ukhtomsky's ships are in poor condition to engage. The *Retvisan*, pluckily

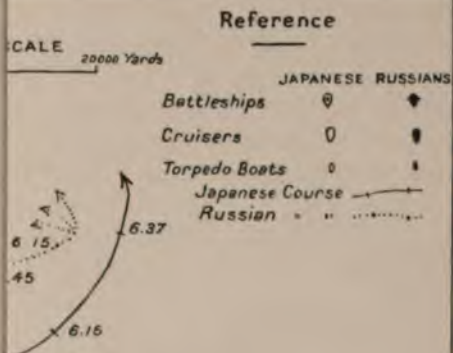
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TIME 6.37



GEMENT

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fought on August 10, was, we know, very severely mauled at close quarters, while the *Pobieda* lost both fighting-tops, and the Japanese admiral considered that five Russian battleships had been severely injured. Admiral Togo was in a good position to express an opinion, since his flagship steamed within short range, and, judging by the losses, appears to have monopolised the cream of the fighting.

If, therefore, Ukhtomsky is not in a position to fight, the alternatives he has to select from are three in number. He may anchor under Golden Hill, in the outer roadstead, where there is probably some temporary security from the fire of the land batteries but danger from torpedoes; or he may stand the racket of the fire in the inner harbour and take his chance; or he may land his men, and such guns as can be moved, to share in the fortunes of the siege, preparing his ships for the last sacrifice when the end is no longer doubtful.

The Japanese summoned General Stössel to surrender on August 16, giving him 24 hours for reply. It is probable that the Russian losses have been heavy. There must be 1,500 wounded from the Nanshan fight at a low computation, since 704 bodies were buried by the Japanese. There were 1,540 killed and wounded between July 27 and 29, and 1,927 between August 8 and 10; some 500 other casualties in two minor engagements have also been reported by General Stössel. Including the inevitable losses which occur day by day in a besieged place, we can assume that there are not less than 6,000 wounded in the hospitals. Allowing for sick, there may not be more than 20,000 effectives of the land army at this moment. Nevertheless, Stössel's reply was never in doubt. Months ago he assured the garrison that he would never give the order to surrender, and it is his bounden duty to stand at least one assault upon his main line of resistance. In this soldierly resolve he and his gallant troops will be strengthened by the Tsar's gracious message of thanks and encouragement.

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Concerning the proceedings of the Japanese since the capture of Takushan we have no definite information, but report states that the Japanese lines are now closing in from the west, when the circle of fire will be complete. The Russian front of defence is now some fourteen miles in extent on the land side, and though the works are formidable they can be crushed by the concentrated fire of modern siege guns. An assault, when it takes place, will only have to deal with the troops of the sector assailed, strengthened by the general reserve if the point of assault has been correctly ascertained in advance. The Japanese have, no doubt, lost heavily, but there is no immediate necessity for haste, and we can feel assured that the permanent works will be reduced to ruins and their main armament silenced before the assaulting columns are paraded in their bivouacs.

When the members of the Aulic Council at St. Petersburg who misdirect the war meet old Dragomiroff, they are likely to hear something to their disadvantage. Was he right, or were they? It is altogether a strange situation. Port Arthur was selected as the centre of Russian naval power in the Pacific; thither proudly sailed the Russian ships in 1898, and thence, less proudly, sailed away our own. So far so good, for Russia had not then encountered a will equal to her own. Ships need docks, workshops, repairing yards, an arsenal—and all these Russia began to provide, reconstructing the town at enormous cost. But docks and arsenals must be defended, according to the rules of text-books of engineering, and forthwith all these grand permanent defences, constituting, as the *Novoe Vremya* has declared, the "most impregnable of all first-class fortresses," sprang up on all the surrounding hills. At vast expense these were built and armed; even the fortresses of Poland contributed the best of their armament. When Kuropatkin arrived on the scene these forts entailed a garrison, and he was compelled to weaken his field army by nearly 80,000 men,

depriving himself of the power to attack his enemy in the field.

But, at least, Port Arthur was safe? It was nothing of the kind, and before the capital element of the defence—resistance on the main line of permanent defences—had so much as come into play, the naval squadron was driven out. There is evidently a misconception somewhere. Port Arthur is still unsubdued; the arsenal is still there; the forts hold firm; yet the Pacific squadron, for whose sake all this blood and treasure and effort have been expended, leaves the army in the lurch and steams away with the Tsar's order to go where it likes or can, to scatter and seek sanctuary in Chinese, German, or British ports—anywhere, in short, so long as it does not return to Port Arthur.

That is all very well, the garrison may reply, but where do we come in, and what are we for? This remnant of 30,000 men, numbers which might have turned defeat in the field into victory, remain separated—according to Russian figures accepted by Colonel Gädke—by 320,000 Japanese from Kuropatkin and mother Russia. The sole remaining task is to fight for the honour of the flag and to prove to the world that Russians are inimitable troops for the defence of fortified positions, a fact which we most of us knew before. They are nothing but a large detachment cut off by order of the Aulic Council from the main army, and bound—provided the fervent prayer of the Tsar be not heard—to be beaten in detail without any human probability of any other result. That is grand strategy *à la Russe*, and it should only be taught in British schools under the head of things to avoid. Never yet have fortified positions, not even the most impregnable of first-class fortresses, with whole army corps to defend them, made up in a maritime war for deficiency in power afloat.

Now if we turn to the third and last task immediately confronting the Mikado's armies, we see that the Yamagata opening of the double objective still

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leaves the Russians, and not the Russians alone, with very unsettled convictions respecting the purpose of their enemy. No doubt it would have been preferable that Port Arthur should have fallen sooner, so that all available troops might have been united against the Russian field army at an earlier stage. No doubt, again, that it will be some disadvantage for Japan if she cannot settle accounts with Vladivostok before the cold weather sets in. But the double objective—Port Arthur and Kuropatkin—which she set herself from the first must have been adopted with full knowledge of the facts, and it could only have been adopted in the belief that her resources were amply sufficient to prosecute the double task to the end.

It is not quite clear why the German authority, Count von Pfeil, is so certain that Oyama will be assuredly defeated. However, if we begin to rummage among old files and cast our eyes over the predictions of German pundits before and during the war, we can draw no other conclusion but that German talent has been completely at fault from first to last during the war, and has not added to its military reputation. Therefore, Count von Pfeil's prophecy of doom for the Japanese is not of a nature to cause us serious disquiet.

Other people appear to entertain strange ideas of military criticism, and consider that it is quite sufficient to discuss events *après coup*, and, in short, to show how causes, after they have been ascertained, produce effects which events have already made known. Nothing is easier. But to be of serious and practical utility it is precisely the converse method that should be adopted. The causes themselves, and all the surrounding *data*, should be considered with absolute impartiality, and the effects these causes are either certain or likely to produce should be duly set down in order. If we look back over the *dossier* of the war—*scribimus indocti doctique*—and observe the number of people who assured us that Russia would have half a

million men in Manchuria by May, and others who declared that Manchuria could by no possibility be invaded by the Japanese, with many other variations on this Russian theme, we notice that the method which is most useful is at the same time most difficult, and that some judgment and experience are required for its practice.

Kuropatkin is in this curious position, that his army has been beaten in many engagements while he himself has been present at none. He knows, or should know, the tally of his enemy's forces, but he has not observed them in action, and we may venture to doubt whether, even now, he rates them at their military worth. At the same time we are obliged to admit, after a close study of the most recent battles, that the regular Russian troops from the West, belonging to the active army, have given evidence of considerable retaining powers, even though victory still remains coy to a Russian embrace. The quick-firing field artillery has also been able to develop its powers in the hands of better trained troops and upon ground more suited to its action, and this will not have escaped the notice of Japanese commanders. Finally, the whole of the Russian troops are beginning, according to their lights, to learn the lesson of the modern battlefield, and there is some slight evidence of a changed and chastened spirit in Russian tactics. If the foolish reliance upon the virtue of intrenchments is at some distant date discarded, there is no saying but that the Russian army may not in process of time become quite effective for the purpose of war.

We are told that the Japanese objective has been changed, and that it is now Mukden and not Liauyang. It is, of course, neither one nor the other, but only the Russian main army, wherever it may be. The evacuation of Haicheng by the Russians, after the disastrous defeat at Tomucheng, enabled the concentration of the three Japanese armies to be at length effected. There was a certain anxiety on this point before, owing to the

absence of lateral communications, but Kuropatkin failed to appreciate it, and the anxiety is now removed. If the Russians have concentrated, so have the Japanese, and the danger—the manifest danger—which Kuroki's right incurred for some time of being overwhelmed is very much minimised, if indeed it is not now entirely removed, by the Russian retreat from Ansanchan. Are there no other Japanese armies but the three we know of in the field? According to the Russians there are not, but the Russian intelligence service has to work in what is practically a hostile country, and the resulting disadvantage no army knows better than ours. There were certainly troops, even of the active army, left in Japan up to a comparatively recent date, and we are quite in the dark as to any concentration that may have been effected in rear of the First Army, or any action impending to the west of the Liau Valley. Nothing, of course, can make up for want of weight at the decisive point, but it may be once more repeated that both the military and the political situation now demand something better than an ordinary victory such as the Japanese have hitherto won.

Some authorities consider that the Japanese might long ago have been at Mukden had they been more enterprising. That is possibly true, but the question is one of price. A dash by Kuroki, strengthened for the occasion in May last, might have succeeded, but, infallibly, it involved some risk, while the Japanese would have lost the dearest wish of their hearts, a grand and decisive battle between the opposing armies at full strength within easy reach of the sea. The Russians have been induced to stand in Southern Manchuria by reason of the reinforcements which have reached them; at an earlier stage they would certainly have gone back. Now that the outposts of the armies are in touch throughout their front and that the admirable intelligence service of the Japanese is better placed, even than before, to control the Russian movements, so soon as the weather permits any movements

at all, we must conclude that, even if Kuropatkin desires to avoid a decisive battle, he can hardly have his wish. All that he has, within certain narrow limitations, is the choice of the battlefield. The initiative he seems to have surrendered to the enemy.
Caelum quid quaerimus ultra ?

CHAPTER XXVII¹

THE BATTLE OF LIAUYANG

THE great historic battle of Liauyang is such an absorbing drama in itself, and may also have such notable consequences, that no apology need be made for tracing at once, in the broadest outline, the movements of the contending armies since August 23. Necessarily, such sketch can only be considered as imperfect and preliminary, since we must await the complete official accounts before attempting to form any final judgment upon all these truly remarkable events, destined to occupy such an important place not only in military lore, but in the history of the world.

On August 23 the Russian army, not inferior in numbers to its enemy, held a chain of advanced positions to the south and east of Liauyang, from Anshantien by Kofanssu to Hungshaling on the right bank of the Tangho, and thence to the Taitse. The front occupied was about 40 miles in length, but only certain chief and dominating positions were held in strength. The strongest of these were—first, Anshantien, on the south front, where a high saddle-back hill commands the surrounding plain; and, secondly, the Tangho position, the latter held by the 10th and 17th Army Corps and three East Siberian Divisions, besides other troops.

The Japanese First Army, reinforced since its earlier actions by two reserve brigades and numbering altogether about 60,000 men, approached the Tangho position on

¹ Based on articles in *The Times* of September 6 and 7, 1904.

August 23 in three columns from the eastward; the Second and Fourth Armies simultaneously drew near to Anshantien from the south with their main strength near the railway.

The opening blow came from the First Army, which had the formidable task of attacking the strongly intrenched positions which the Russians had been constructing for months past on the steep hills from Hungshaling to Kungchanling and thence to the highlands north of Totiensz and Tohsikou. The Japanese had no positions for their artillery except on the main road to Liauyang, and the greater part of the work fell upon the infantry alone.

General Kuroki's left column commenced operations on August 23, and by the 25th held the high ground on a line north of Erhtaoho and Pulintzu. The centre column, at midnight of August 25-26, moved forward and carried with the bayonet the enemy's main position at Kungchanling. The Russians held out in a second position and endeavoured to retake the lost ground, while their artillery remained unsubdued. Nevertheless, by hard fighting the Russians were driven back step by step into the valley of the Tangho. The right column also made a night attack upon Hungshaling and Chapanling, but though the right wing had some success the Russians held firm in their main works.

On August 26 close and bitter fighting took place all along this front. General Kuroki's left column endeavoured to oust the Russians from the hills northwest of Kofanssu, but the semi-permanent defences constructed upon dominating sites, and the superiority of the Russian artillery, forbade success. The left wing of this Japanese column was in its turn assailed by increasing numbers, and could do little more than hold its ground. Thus on the night of August 26 the First Army had driven a wedge into the Russian left and had cut it in two, but as the wings held firm the Japanese objective had not been attained.

During the night, however, the Russians attacked

their enemy's right and were repulsed. The Japanese followed up this success and carried the main works at Hungshaling, capturing a whole battery of guns and turning the Russian left. On August 27 the attack was renewed under more favourable conditions, and when night fell Anping and the whole of the right bank of the Tangho were in Japanese hands. It is alleged, on the Russian side, that the reason for this retreat was a spate upon the Tangho, rendering the river unfordable, and causing great anxiety concerning the single bridge which spanned it. The Russians on this side, numbering 65,000 men and 120 guns, retired towards Liauyang, having lost 1,500 men, but strong detachments still held out in rear-guard positions, and the Japanese left column, in the evening, had not advanced far north of Tohsikou. The First Army had carried out its preliminary mission, but with a loss of 2,000 men and after long and desperate fighting, mainly by night.

The Second and Fourth Armies advanced upon Anshantien on August 25, but the attack this day was not pressed with vigour, and the Russian losses on the southern front were only 600 men. The defeat of the Russian left caused Kuropatkin to order a retirement from Anshantien. He was well advised, since an enveloping movement was in progress both to the west and east of the town. A Japanese column from the west cut in upon the line of retreat at 10 a.m. on the 28th near Pakuakou and threw the Russians into disorder, capturing a battery of artillery which had become bogged in heavy ground, beside 50 or 60 carriages and ammunition waggons. The remainder of the column broke away and made good its retreat. Thus by August 28 the Russians had lost all their advanced positions and were driven in upon Liauyang with a loss of 16 guns and 2,100 men. It is probable that the actual losses exceeded the official estimate. This retreat upon Liauyang was an arduous operation. The mountainous character of the country to the eastward and the bad condition of the low ground and the roads after the

rains made progress incredibly difficult, and it was only after immense exertions that all the guns and baggage were collected at Liauyang.

If these preliminary operations were so far successful from the Japanese point of view, it is also true that the First Army had been very highly tried, and that, had part of the Fourth Army co-operated on its left, the long and wearing struggle on the Tangho might have been materially shortened. The Japanese Staff hardly appear to have realised the necessary consequence of a success by the First Army upon Kuropatkin's decisions. The attack upon Anshantien was a day too late; the bird had flown, and the stroke of the Second and Fourth Armies was delivered in the air. Moreover, the First Army had been very heavily engaged, and its left was from 20 to 30 miles south of the Taitse on the morning of the 28th. The First Army was, therefore, not in a favourable situation to combine for a general attack, and it was too much separated and too exhausted to concentrate rapidly on its right and to pursue, with all the requisite numbers, vigour and rapidity, the most important and decisive act of the campaign which was now allotted to it.

The Second and Fourth Armies were, however, fresh, and had been only slightly engaged. They therefore advanced against the enemy, and in the afternoon of August 29 opened fire upon the Russians, now firmly established in the famous Liauyang position.

Liauyang was the Russian military capital of Southern Manchuria. It is a large town of some 60,000 inhabitants, in itself an advantage to an army of operations. It stands at the junction of the two main roads, one of which leads by the Motien and Fenghwangchenn to Korea, and the other by the west coast of the Liautung Peninsula to Port Arthur. It is on the railway; and in the Russian town which had grown up round the station were all the magazines of the field army, with the stores, supplies, ammunition, hospitals, remount depôts, and other establishments necessary for

the continuous activity of an army in the field. The defeat of the Russian army at this point, which had been selected for the first great battle of the campaign, sealed the fate of Port Arthur, deprived the Russians of the supplies in the fruitful Liao Valley, and threatened to cut off the army from the easiest approaches to China, whence supplies and ponies had come in in a constant stream throughout the war.

Liauyang, in short, was worth a mass, and we can understand the decision to fight there. Tactically the position was strong. Some three miles south of the town a chain of hills in crescent shape runs from Mount Shoushan, 426 ft. high, south-west of the town, round to the Taitse near the junction of the Tangho; to the west Hsinlitun offers a favourable point for defence; north of the Taitse are other hills offering good assembly ground for reserves. This position had been deliberately chosen as the battlefield, and, long before the war broke out, fortifications were under construction here. As the tide of war ebbed back towards the town, these intrenchments were extended; the right of the position upon the plain and round the town of Liauyang was defended by works of a serious character; many heavy guns were brought up to the railway station of Liauyang, and emplacements prepared for the numerous and powerful quick-firing field artillery at Kuropatkin's disposal. If fifteen or more Russian divisions could not hold such a formidable field fortress against open assault by all the might of Japan, while Port Arthur still bravely held up another Nippon army at its gates, the cause of Russia in Southern Manchuria was lost, certainly for this year, perhaps for longer.

Kuropatkin determined to stand his ground and to fight the quarrel out to a finish.

The Russian Army of Manchuria, now at length concentrated and in a humour to stand fast, included the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Siberian Army Corps, the 10th and 17th European Army Corps and about one brigade of the 1st European Corps which was in process

of transport eastward, besides the Cossack Divisions under Mishchenko, Samsonoff, and Grekoff, giving in all a combatant strength of about 220,000 men. These troops were disposed approximately as follows on the evening of August 29 : General Baron Stackelberg, with his fine corps the 1st Siberians, held the dominating Shoushan and the line from Miaota on the railway to the village of Tawa. Here the 3rd Siberian Army Corps, under General Ivanoff, took up the line of defence, holding the high ground between Tawa and the road leading from Minkiafan to Liauyang. On his left, General Slutchevsky, with the 10th European Army Corps, held the front from Minkiafan to Siapon and the Taitse River. This contraction of the formerly extended front permitted the despatch of General Bilderling's 17th Army Corps to the right bank of the Taitse, where it took position from Slutchevsky's left to Hsikwantun. The 2nd Army Corps, General Sassulitch, the 4th, General Zarubaieff, and half the 5th, General Dembovsky, formed the general reserve at and around Liauyang. On the extreme left the 54th Reserve Division of the 5th Corps, under Major-General Orloff, together with Samsonoff's Cossacks, occupied the Yentai Mines, while Mishchenko protected the right of the position on the low ground about Wuluntai.

The three Japanese armies advancing to the attack of this formidable position were the Second (Oku), the Fourth (Nodzu), and the First (Kuroki), including, from left to right, the 6th, 4th, 3rd, 5th, 10th, Guards, 2nd, and 12th Divisions, reinforced by a certain number of reserve brigades, the exact number and strength of which have not yet been officially disclosed. The numerical strength of the Japanese was inferior to that of the enemy.

The Russian position was strongly intrenched. West of Shoushan, epaulements had been made for artillery, and on their right were other trenches for infantry. Trenches ran all along Shoushan, and in front of them the *kaoliang* had been cut down to allow

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a field of fire of varying extent, but not over 800 or under 150 yards. Further east the trenches were continued, but the greater part of the artillery used indirect fire during the action. Only a few batteries were established on the slopes facing the enemy. The units of the 17th Army Corps occupied a chain of hills with steep bluffs facing eastward. The artillery fire from these hills swept the whole valley of the Taitse, and protected the left of the 10th Army Corps, in a very effective manner. Most of these trenches were of the character of fieldworks of normal types, namely, infantry trenches for riflemen kneeling, with field shelters and traverses, while gun-pits were prepared for artillery, with shelters against plunging fire. On Shoushan the works were more solid, while wire entanglements, *trous de loup*, and fougasses presented serious obstacles to assault. The hills themselves were difficult of access and commanded the Japanese positions throughout the front.

Round Liauyang itself there were strong defences of even more solid kind. Eleven closed works had been built, with parapets for men standing, while traverses and bombproofs gave additional security; the ditches in front of these works were deep, and wire entanglements, besides fougasses and *trous de loup*, were accumulated upon every avenue of approach. For a distance of 800 paces the *kaoliang* had been half cut through near the ground and then bent over and interlaced, making a novel kind of abatis of an effective description. Five bridges were at disposal for movements across the Taitse, namely, a pontoon bridge at Khvahe, two bridges of native junks at Efa and Kao-litziun, a pile bridge at Chaotzialin, and lastly the railway bridge. The greater part of the depôts and services connected with the line of communications were transferred to Tieling on or before August 29.

On the night of August 29 the Japanese brought up the rest of the artillery of the Second and Fourth Armies, and at dawn on the 30th opened a severe and continuous cannonade upon the Russian positions. In the front

attacked by the Second and Fourth Armies there were the guns of the five divisions, besides six batteries of field howitzers and some 10·5 Krupp cannon taken at Kinchou, making in all some 220 guns in battery on the southern front. In all directions, but mainly towards the Russian centre and right, strong columns of infantry deployed and made their way through the *kaoliang* crops, over a horseman's head at this season, seeking to force back the defenders from their advanced positions. The left column of the First Army, coming up from the south, attacked the positions at Menchafang and Yayuchi at dawn on the 30th, but the enemy was reinforced and no impression could be made. A column of the Fourth Army attacked the centre north-west of Weijago and at first gained some success, but at 10 a.m. a large body of Russians, eventually reinforced to two divisions, with over 50 guns, came out from Liauyang and made a fierce counter-attack. By the afternoon the Japanese column was in a dangerous position, but Nodzu's men held on stoutly, and at 3 p.m., aided by part of the column of the First Army on their right, repulsed the Russians and established themselves securely near Weijago.

While these two columns thus held in play the Russian centre and occupied the attention of the enemy, the Second Army and the main body of the Fourth Army were directed to the left, and from dawn to dusk assailed the Russians from Hsinlitun to Shoushanpao. The Second Army occupied Tachao-kiatung by 10 a.m., and attacked the west front of Shoushan. The Russians held Gozucazui, and opened a hot fire from this point with their machine-guns. Up to 4.30 p.m. no progress was made, although the whole army was employed, and it became necessary to strengthen the left with part of the general reserve. In this part of the field the Japanese reached Wangkehrshan, whence fire was brought upon the Russian rear, striking the reserves, part of whom had been brought up, and had been massed on the northern slopes of

Shoushan. The Russian defences on this side proved too formidable to be overcome easily. They were of great and unexpected strength, while the obstacles accumulated in front of them presented great difficulties to the infantry advance. On Shoushan alone, where stood General Baron Stackelberg, 100 guns were in position, and round all these formidable posts the fight continued to rage till dark without any advantage gained. In the night the Russians attacked the Second Army, but were repulsed, and a Japanese attack upon Shoushan which followed had no better success.

The Russians had taken one hint at least from Boer tactics, and had lined the foot of the slopes with infantry trenches. Against these the attacks of the Japanese were made in vain throughout the 30th, and, although the shrapnel fire struck the whole line of works on the hills, and caused the Russians a loss of some 3,000 men, no material impression was made upon the defence. To all parts of the sorely tried Russian Empire copies of the *Official Messenger* carried the welcome news of a splendid victory.

But it was only the beginning. That night the 12th Division of the First Army began to concentrate on its right, leaving to its comrades the task of holding and pounding the Russians to the south of the Taitse. The mission of the First Army was to cross the river near Liantaowan, and to occupy a line from Hankaladzu to Santsago by 4 p.m. on August 31. It was known that the two divisions of the 17th Army Corps, repulsed at Hanpoling, had crossed to the north of the Taitse on August 29, and it was therefore morally certain that the First Army would be vigorously opposed.

For a decisive operation of this character, weight was essential. But all the First Army was not available to join in the projected movement. Its left column, as we have seen, had been in difficulties from the beginning, and on August 30 had been detached so far to the south that it had joined in the delaying action of the Fourth Army with the Russian centre. Kuroki

was also compelled to leave a screen of troops upon the Tangho to meet a possible and even threatened counter-attack on the part of the enemy on this side, while he was obliged to keep one mixed brigade in the Penhsihu direction to guard his exposed right flank. It thus befell that the Guards Division, one reserve brigade, and one regiment of the 2nd Division could not take immediate part in the movement north of the Taitse, and that General Kuroki was forced to undertake this hazardous and decisive operation with first one and then two incomplete divisions, eventually strengthened by one mixed brigade—a force manifestly incapable of carrying through its task with the desirable vigour and completeness should the enemy display the slightest knowledge of war.

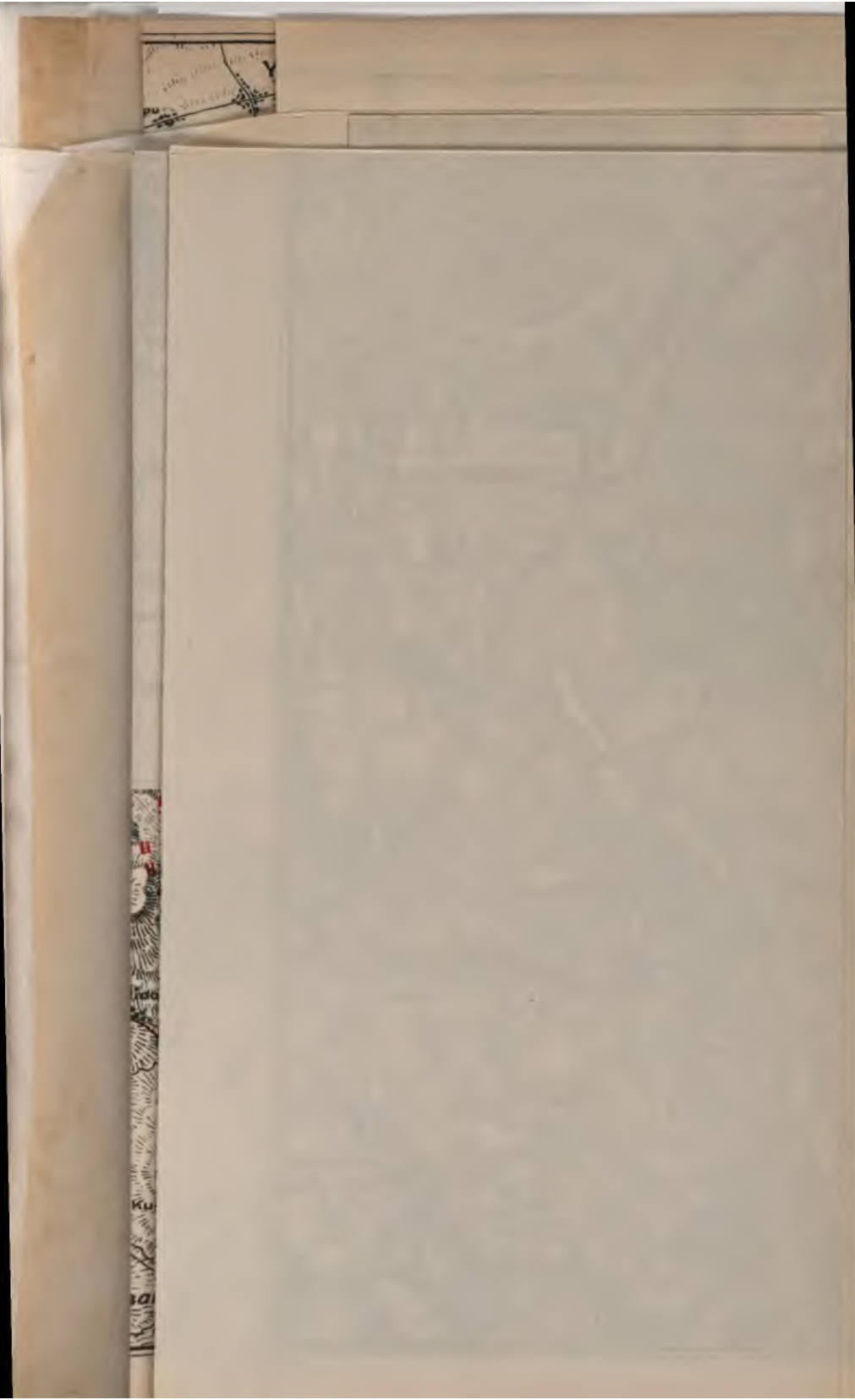
The movement across the river began at 11 p.m. on August 30. The 12th Division crossed first, and advanced towards Kanwantun, finding at first only small bodies of the enemy to the north and west. Okazaki's brigade of the 2nd Division, leaving a small force at Shihchufoz, crossed between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. on the 31st, and by the evening of August 31 the above troops occupied a line from Kwantung to Swichun through Santsago, as ordered. At 4 a.m. the same day the reserve brigade near Penhsihu crossed the river at Wohengtun, drove the enemy from Weiningyin, and occupied Penhsihu. The artillery, which had awaited the construction of a bridge, were passed over on the night of August 31, and joined the force north of the river. Finally, Matsunaga's brigade of the 2nd Division crossed during the night of September 1, and joined the fighting line at 9.30 a.m. on September 2. A delicate part of the movement had thus far taken place without any molestation.

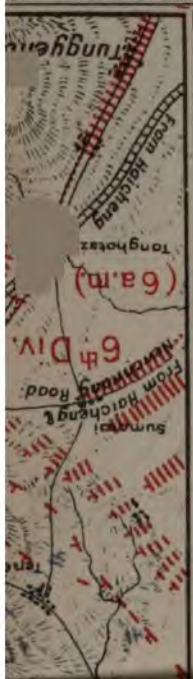
Meanwhile the Second and Fourth Armies, despite their failure to make any serious impression upon August 30, renewed their attacks on August 31 with increasing vigour. At 3 a.m. the infantry of Oku's right column made a resolute attack, and effected a

lodgment on the high ground south of Shoushan with one regiment. Fired upon heavily from both flanks and assailed by superior forces, this body was forced back to the foot of the hills, after suffering serious losses; while another regiment on its right found the fire so heavy and the hills so steep that it was forced to lie down at the foot of the hills, and was unable to advance. Oku's second column, after repulsing frequent attacks during the night, followed up the enemy in the darkness, and, in spite of a deadly fire from machine-guns, pushed on to the railway. Here it was overlooked by the Russians on the high ground, and, though reinforced by five battalions from Oku's third column, was unable to make headway. The whole strength of the 3rd and 4th Divisions of the Second Army was thus engaged, and all the available artillery was in action at effective ranges; but the position was too strong, and no advantage was gained. Finally, the commander of Oku's third column, or 6th Division, reported at 5 p.m. that a fresh Russian force had appeared at Peitai, and the last reserves of this division were sent forward to meet them. The situation was growing critical, and it was now determined that the whole of the artillery should concentrate its fire preparatory to a renewal of the infantry attack. At 7 p.m., therefore, the guns opened with increased vigour, while the infantry clung tenaciously to the ground they had won, and prepared to renew their attacks at night.

The incidents which had occurred during this fighting of the Second Army were repeated in Nodzu's army during the day of August 31. A severe fight raged throughout the day, but as darkness fell no advantage of moment had been gained, though the greater part of the troops had been thrown into the fight.

At this critical moment of the battle the influence of General Kuroki's movement was at last felt. Kuropatkin learnt of his enemy's move in the forenoon of August 31. As, moreover, the attacks on the left of the Russian front south of the river—decidedly the





weakest part of his southern defences—were much less energetic than those on the centre and right, Kuropatkin judged that the main body of Kuroki's army had been told off to turn the left flank of the Russian army, and to act against its line of communications.

In this belief Kuropatkin decided to withdraw his southern front to the inner line of defences surrounding Liauyang, and to concentrate a large force against Kuroki, and attempt to hurl his army back into the river. Orders were therefore issued in the course of the evening of August 31 for the withdrawal of the 1st, 3rd, and 10th Army Corps from the positions they had held so stiffly for two days; while to General Zarubaieff, with the 2nd and 4th Army Corps, was confided the duty of resisting upon the strong line of works round Liauyang. Thanks to the numerous bridges which had been provided, this movement was executed during the night without a hitch, and by the morning of September 1 the three Army Corps were north of the river, where they were granted a brief but much-needed rest. A number of units were retained in the old positions to cover the retreat, while Mishchenko's Cossacks were utilised for the same purpose.

When, therefore, in the course of the night of August 31, and at dawn on September 1, the indomitable Japanese continued their fierce attacks upon Hsinlitun and Shoushan, and when at last their valour met with a well-merited reward, and the last remaining Russians were driven out of their works and the whole position occupied, it was excusable on the part of Marshal Oyama to attribute this success to causes other than those which had brought it to pass. He spoke of the remnant of a routed army, and referred to the pursuit; but when his further advance was barred by the two comparatively fresh Army Corps holding Liauyang, supported by artillery in battery on the hills north-east of Muchwang, the character of the manœuvre upon which his enemy was set became gradually understood.

Meanwhile the troops of the First Army across the river were now holding a front six miles in length, presenting the appearance of a much larger force than they actually possessed, and to the end of the action their strength was greatly over-estimated by the enemy. At dawn on September 1 the first column and main body of the second attacked the 17th Army Corps west of Haiyentai and the Hsikwantun hills and south of the Tsofango hills, but the opposing artillery fire and the Russian counter-attacks made progress difficult and slow. Umezawa's mixed brigade, however, drove the enemy before it, and by 3 p.m. seized the hills north of Hongshantse.

Not satisfied with his progress, Kuroki continued his attacks at night. By dawn on September 2 his right column occupied a line from near the Yentai Mines to the high ground north-west of Tayao, while his second column captured the hills north-west of Haiyentai by 2 a.m., but the detachment which attacked Hsikwantun ridge and 181-Mètre Hill to westward met with strong opposition, and could do little more than hold its ground when won. An order was now sent to the Guards to cross at 181-Mètre Hill, but the order was not one that it was possible to execute. Considering that Kuroki, with two and a half divisions, was now engaged with nine infantry and two cavalry divisions of the enemy, it is not a matter for surprise that the impetus of his attack had reached its term.

The troops which Kuropatkin had destined for his counter-attack upon Kuroki included the 1st and 3rd East Siberian Corps, the 10th and 17th European Army Corps, Orloff's 54th Division of the 5th Corps, and the cavalry of Mishchenko, Samsonoff, and Grekoff. These troops took with them eight days' supplies, and were followed only by their fighting trains and ammunition columns. The manner in which these various units were for the most part withdrawn from the southern fighting line, transported across the river,

and aligned in front of Kuroki, was creditable to the directing staff.

The orders were for Bilderling, with the 17th Corps, to form the advanced guard; the main body was in two columns, the right composed of the 10th Army Corps and the left of the 1st Siberians, the latter protected on their left by Orloff's Division and the Cossacks of Samsonoff and Grekoff. Mishchenko's cavalry were left at Sahetun to await orders, while the 3rd Siberian Corps acted as reserve.

At 11 a.m. on September 2, an hour before the heads of the Russian corps were aligned, Kuropatkin, who had taken his position near the village of Siao-chentse (?), became anxious respecting his left, from which no news had been received, and he thereupon despatched one of Mishchenko's regiments to inquire into Orloff's proceedings. This general had got into trouble during the Boxer outbreak owing to initiative attributed to insubordination, and had been put on the shelf in command of the 54th Reserve Brigade. The fortune of war now ordained that this commander and a body of untried troops of secondary value, just out of the train after a thirty days' journey, should decide the issues which were being fought out over this immense battlefield.

Orloff, with thirteen battalions, occupied a position on some hills south-east of the Yentai Mines on September 1. He was without orders, but, hearing the guns in his vicinity, determined to march to the cannon. As he was starting off he received a telegram from Army Headquarters, worded as follows: "In the general order your mission is to join Bilderling if he is not attacked, and to support his left if he is." Orloff therefore stopped his advance and informed Bilderling that he awaited his instructions. Having no further orders at dawn on September 2, and finding the 17th Corps engaged at a distance of five miles to his right, Orloff attacked, advancing without reconnaissance or artillery preparation, through the *kaoliang*. Samsonoff, alleging

a direct order from Kuropatkin directing him to hold the Yentai Mines, is supposed to have refused to accompany him. Orloff fell into an ambushade and was heavily defeated by Shinamura's brigade of the 12th Division. His troops suffered great losses, and were driven away some six miles to the west in disorder.

Informed of this mischance soon after 3 p.m., and alarmed for his extreme left and rear, which appeared to be uncovered, Kuropatkin ordered Stackelberg's 1st Siberian Army Corps to hasten on to the rescue. But this corps was exhausted by ceaseless fighting, and its numbers were reduced to some sixty men per company. Not before dusk was this much-tried corps able to intervene effectually. Meanwhile the Cossacks filled the void, and, though they offered an energetic resistance with dismounted men for some time, were eventually driven back in their turn. This disaster to his left made a deep impression upon Kuropatkin, who now faltered at the critical moment and failed to proceed with an attack which he had engineered and prepared with a considerable degree of skill. "The enemy," he telegraphed in exculpatory vein to the Tsar on September 11, "were now established in an extremely strong position on two hills, and it would have been too hazardous a task for our troops on our left flank to have attacked them in view of the losses sustained in the previous five days. Inasmuch as on the night of September 2 our troops were also compelled to abandon their positions near the village of Hsikwantun I decided to retire to Mukden."

While nine Russian divisions had thus been pirouetting for two days before Kuroki's extended but attenuated line without venturing to make a single attack of any importance, circumstances had fortunately allowed the commander of the First Army to call up Matsunaga's brigade of the 2nd Division, and this joined him at 9.30 a.m. on September 2. He stood badly in need of reinforcement. His detachment at the mines was outnumbered by three to one, little

though Kuropatkin was aware of the fact, and in the late afternoon sixty guns were in action against it. Nearly a hundred guns were showering projectiles upon the troops of the second column which had taken Hsi-kwantun and Haiyentai, and were clinging to this blood-stained ground with increasing difficulty. The men had not eaten a meal nor drunk a drop of water since the preceding night, and had subsisted on the small supply of raw rice carried in their haversacks.

With the arrival of the brigade of the 2nd Division the First Army renewed the contest with vigour, but the weight of numbers and of metal opposed to it was overwhelming, and though the 1st Siberians were forced away to the west, the mass of the Russian forces confronting Kuroki's centre and left could not be driven back, though fighting continued until late at night.

Meanwhile the defenders of Liauyang had deserved well of their country, and for three long days held off from Kuropatkin the whole weight of the Second and Fourth Armies of Japan. Re-forming his command during the day of September 1, General Oku advanced in full strength at 7 a.m. on September 2, supported by General Nodzu on his right. By 10 a.m. both armies were in action, but neither could make any impression on the Russian defences throughout the day. All the artillery of the combined Japanese armies was in action, and repeated attempts were made to close, but the strength of the defences and the desperate character of the resistance rendered all efforts useless. At night the customary effort was made by part of one of Oku's columns to assault near Shiquan, but the obstacles and cross-fire from machine-guns rendered the effort fruitless.

Kuropatkin's order for the evacuation of Liauyang now reached the garrison, but the retirement from the town was no light task in view of the continued pressure of the southern armies. Oku continued his attacks at dawn on September 3, bringing up his guns within rifle range to breach the forts and silence the machine-guns.

A part of the defenders were thrown into disorder, but the remainder held firm, though Oku's infantry had now crept up to within 200 yards of the intrenchments. Nodzu's efforts were no less persistent, but the Russians held firm to cover the evacuation, which had begun in the course of the afternoon, and was carried out with admirable coolness and skill. All the equipment was removed, but it was impossible to save the commissariat reserves, which amounted to eight days' supplies for the army, and most of these were destroyed. The pontoon bridge was dismantled and removed, the other temporary bridges burnt, and the railway bridge partially wrecked. Before this last act was performed the rear-guards were hurried back, and when, soon after midnight, the Japanese rushed over the defences with loud cheers, they found that their prey had escaped them, and was safely across the river.

Interference with the pursuit on the part of the Second and Fourth Armies was impracticable. The means of passage were wanting, while it was impossible to save the burning bridges owing to the fire of the Russians on the further bank.

Kuroki, for his part, was still faced by the mass of the Russian army, and on September 3 was unable to make progress. On this day, however, one brigade of the Guards at length joined the army, while the second appeared on the following day. On September 4 131-Mètre Hill was occupied, and the pursuit organised. The Russian army was now in full retreat. Kuroki's right flank detachment occupied Pingtaitse, and then advanced towards Yentai. At night the 12th Division came to close quarters with a superior force of the enemy, but drove him away to the north-east at 6.30 a.m., then occupying a line from Motienkau to Lilinkau, where a halt was made. The 2nd Division seized Santaopa at 1.30 p.m. on September 5, and from this point its artillery came into action for half an hour against the enemy retiring from Fanshien, and threw him into confusion. The Guards reached Laotsitai at

8 a.m., and there halted, while the mixed brigade occupied Yumentseshan after a fight.

The Russian casualties from August 26 to September 4 were estimated at 25,000 men by Marshal Oyama, while the Japanese lost 17,539 men between August 26 and September 10, namely, 4,866 in the First Army, 4,992 in the Fourth, and 7,681 in the Second.

When a defeat of the army of a great military empire occurs almost before our eyes, we are all alike interested in ascertaining the causes, so that a similar calamity may be averted from our arms. We desire to know whether any great principles of strategy have been violated or whether some failure in leadership, arms, tactics, or military spirit has been the determining cause of the misfortune.

The time is not ripe for a full discussion of all these subjects, but there are certain points which already admit of separate discussion and need not be left in the background until we obtain all that full and complete information which we can scarcely anticipate for many years, when all the official reports from each side have been sifted and compared.

Let it be said at once it is not owing to any decay of military spirit in the Russian troops, whether officers or men, that this misfortune has fallen upon them. Such as the Russian army always has been, such it remains. It is rather the diabolical power of the Japanese in the attack—to adopt the expressive phrase of the *Novosti*—that attracts and holds our attention.

It is not, then, so much the failure of the Russians as the success of the Japanese that is the centre of interest. So far as we have gone, the clear and constantly accumulating evidence from the Far East shows that never in our time have such rare and splendid qualities been applied to the business of offensive war as in this year of grace 1904 by the rulers and people of Japan.

Six months of war against a military empire of

130 millions of people, and not one solitary defeat on land or sea ! In every succeeding battle the superiority of the alert and intelligent islanders becoming more and more painfully manifest, and then, to crown all, this magnificent achievement, this decisive battle, so ardently desired, whereby Japan has indelibly graven her name upon the annals of history and has proved her titles to military fame by a resounding victory which will reverberate to the four corners of Asia and change the spirit of the East.

Follow the Japanese fighter where we may, he commands our reasoned admiration. Are the Germans more thorough, have the French more dash, are the English more stubborn, or the Dutch more slim ? The Russians are out of luck to have encountered and first proved the mettle of such a foe. The Russians have been beaten—to put it with brutal frankness—because their army, though good, is not good enough to fight Japanese. There is no other reason which can account for the fact that a Russian army in a strongly intrenched position has been turned out of it by an enemy inferior in numbers. Patriotism, valour, constancy are all fine qualities, and the Russians yield to none in their possession ; but all are wasted in modern war if not united with intelligence—and here Russia fails.

The Russian army, like the Russian Church, has existed for ages past with no definite purpose save to support and extend the power of Tsarism. Intelligence was not required for that purpose ; on the contrary, it was inconvenient. An autocrat has no use for an army that thinks. The ideal was to possess a weapon ready to the hand of autocracy, a weapon that could be used for autocratic purposes, and, when not required, would lie in the corner inert. That ideal was attained, but only because the Russian nation, whence the raw material was drawn, was embedded in a slough of antiquated and barbarous superstitions. When war came, modern war, with its imperative demand for independence, initiative, and intelligence, these qualities were missing. They

had been sternly repressed for centuries, and only centuries can renew them. The Russian soldier, when sober and not brutalised by slaughter, is a great, strong, kind, superstitious child; as good a fellow as ever stepped, but always a child. Given an educated and highly trained corps of officers of a good class, capable of instructing, caring for, and leading him with judgment and skill, the Russian soldier would go far. But there is no such corps of officers in Russia, and, though there are many highly educated and accomplished officers in the Tsar's army, there are not enough to leaven the lump.

See, then, what happens. After a few experiences, doleful indeed, Russian generals fly from the mountains, from the *kaoliang*, from every battlefield that is not a parade-ground strongly intrenched. The Russians were turned out of the mountain passes at the end of June without an effort; in the open, at Telissu, the Japanese ran over them. It was only when the Russian, gunner or foot soldier, was given a trench and a parapet and a clear field of fire and told which way to shoot that he proved to be of any serious service at all.

Every educated soldier knows that fortifications are an invention of the Evil One, and that an army that intrenches, except offensively, is an army that is lost. War is an affair of activity, initiative, and movement; the trench and parapet are the negation of all three. A soldier taught to trust in the virtue of trench and parapet loses heart when he is taken from them, or they from him; he gives himself up for lost. Thus every army should have no engineers, but only pioneers; men who can build bridges, blast rocks, make roads, blow open doors, mine the enemy's works, construct railways and telegraphs and work them; do all, in fact, that assists movement, and learn nothing and teach nothing that prevents it.

General Kuropatkin, Minister of War when the existing Russian instructions for battle were published at St. Petersburg, must be supposed to have approved

them. They were, of course, inspired by Dragomiroff, and breathe throughout the loftiest spirit of the offensive, pushed to almost excessive lengths. How comes it that, when Kuropatkin had to apply his own instructions in action, he adopted precisely the contrary line, remained the passive victim of his enemy's initiative, dug his men into trenches, and made every battle a Japanese holiday?

Kuropatkin is a man of intelligence and experience. He is, of course, a Russian and a fatalist, loyal to the core to his Imperial master, and capable of committing any folly he is ordered to perpetrate; phlegmatic, too, and no phlegmatic general has ever yet made a success of war, nor ever will; yet withal a man who inspires love in his troops and sympathy in the world. Kuropatkin, we can be sure, would have followed the sage councils of his own instructions had he dared. We can only conclude that he found, as every Russian general must find, that his men and his officers were not capable of carrying on an offensive campaign in rough ground from want of intelligence and field-craft. That dismal situation is not to be changed in a day, for *causa latet, vis est notissima*, and it is the Russian people and all their institutions that must be reformed from top to bottom before progress can percolate from the Russian schoolmaster through the ranks of the army.

These things being as they are, was Kuropatkin right or wrong to accept battle at Liauyang, or to submit to the dictation of battle from higher quarters? Let us give him, for the sake of argument, 200,000 men and his adversary the same; more, no doubt, if we add non-combatants. In rear, and drawing towards the field army, there were such parts of the 1st Army Corps as had not yet arrived, and the 6th Siberian Corps and the 6th Don Cossack Division and various other troops. There were also as many more behind as Kuropatkin could promise to feed. Every month he could hope to become stronger by 20,000 to 30,000 men, provided the railway held out and did not fail

for three whole weeks, as it has recently done for the second time since the war broke out. His game, therefore, was to wait, not to exhaust his troops by useless and discursive fighting, but to hold them together at all costs and exercise infinite patience until the required superiority of numbers was secured. If, on the other hand, after a full review of the situation, the Russian Government were forced to admit that the necessary superiority of numbers could never be expected, then, in view of the prowess of the Japanese, the campaign was lost, and it was the business of the Tsar's advisers to recognise the fact and act accordingly.

The famous *communiqué* issued to the Russian press at the time of Kuropatkin's appointment to the command distinctly affirmed that the policy of delay until superiority of numbers was obtained was the policy deliberately adopted. We ventured to remark at the time that this policy, admirable in itself and obviously the only strategy deserving of the name, neglected that terrible entanglement of Port Arthur, and that no Tsar and no Russian army could resist the cry for help from the great fortress. How true that forecast was the events of the past six months have shown; all the Russian disasters have been directly traceable to the terrible magnetism of the great place-of-arms on the Pacific shores.

Some months ago we quoted with approval Dragomiroff's advice, sent to us by a Russian correspondent, that Port Arthur should be evacuated, believing that it was in the true interest of Russia not to leave the great garrison to add to the laurels of Japan, and that a smaller sacrifice of national self-esteem was better than the greater sacrifice which events would surely impose.

The two points of view, whether Port Arthur should have been held or not, are argued in the *National Review* for September, 1904, and may form the subject of controversy to the end of time. Our point of view was, and is, that the diversion of 30,000 men to form

the garrison of Port Arthur left Kuropatkin too weak to take the offensive against the Japanese army first landed, and thus tended to deprive him of one of the greatest advantages that an army ashore possesses against a great invasion from over-sea, an operation necessarily slow and requiring time, save in the case of a Power possessing such a mercantile fleet as ours. We also maintained, both before the war began and now, that Port Arthur contained the fatal germs of strategic death for the Pacific squadron, and that the whole underlying idea of the fortress or harbour of refuge is based upon false reasoning and is a heresy that deserves to be placed on the index of our national strategy.

As regards the play and counter-play of the rival navies, we assumed, on what seemed and has since proved to be correct information from Russia, that the junction of the Baltic and Pacific squadrons was a patriotic chimera, since the Baltic squadron was not ready for war, nor could be made ready until the Pacific squadron would probably be, for strategic purposes, dead.

Under these circumstances the retention of Port Arthur appeared to be an incubus to Russia, and nothing else. At the time this question was first discussed evacuation by the garrison was possible, since the Japanese armies had not landed. As regards the squadron, we maintained, and still maintain, that it would have been infinitely better to have come out and fought with Togo with every ship that could float, with the utmost degree of energy, to the last ship and the last round, with the view of breaking in at all costs upon Japan's small and non-expansive capital of warships, and thus preparing the way for future action. What has been gained by the passive attitude of the Pacific squadron? It has been whittled down from its considerable original strength, unit by unit and week by week, to five damaged battleships, one effective cruiser, and a few torpedo craft. These vessels are

fighting with siege batteries; their decks, says Mr. Dooley, are intrenched. When the Japanese siege batteries control the whole area of the harbour the destruction of these ships is assured. The Pacific squadron has not, from first to last, been used as a naval force at all.

We have never been able to perceive that Port Arthur in Russian hands necessarily entailed such delay upon the main operations of the Japanese army as to affect prejudicially their course or their success. We have been unable to agree that Port Arthur imposed upon the Japanese two conflicting objectives, since the military resources of Japan appeared to us adequate for the prosecution of the dual enterprise. We have also contested the assumption that Port Arthur necessarily retained more men before its walls than the numbers of the garrison. That the Japanese have landed and employed a larger number of men than the garrison in order to draw close their lines and reach the ships in harbour with the fire of their siege batteries we can admit, but it is not a necessary consequence that they should all have been since detained round the fortress, for precedents could be quoted where garrisons besieged have been held fast by smaller numbers than their own.

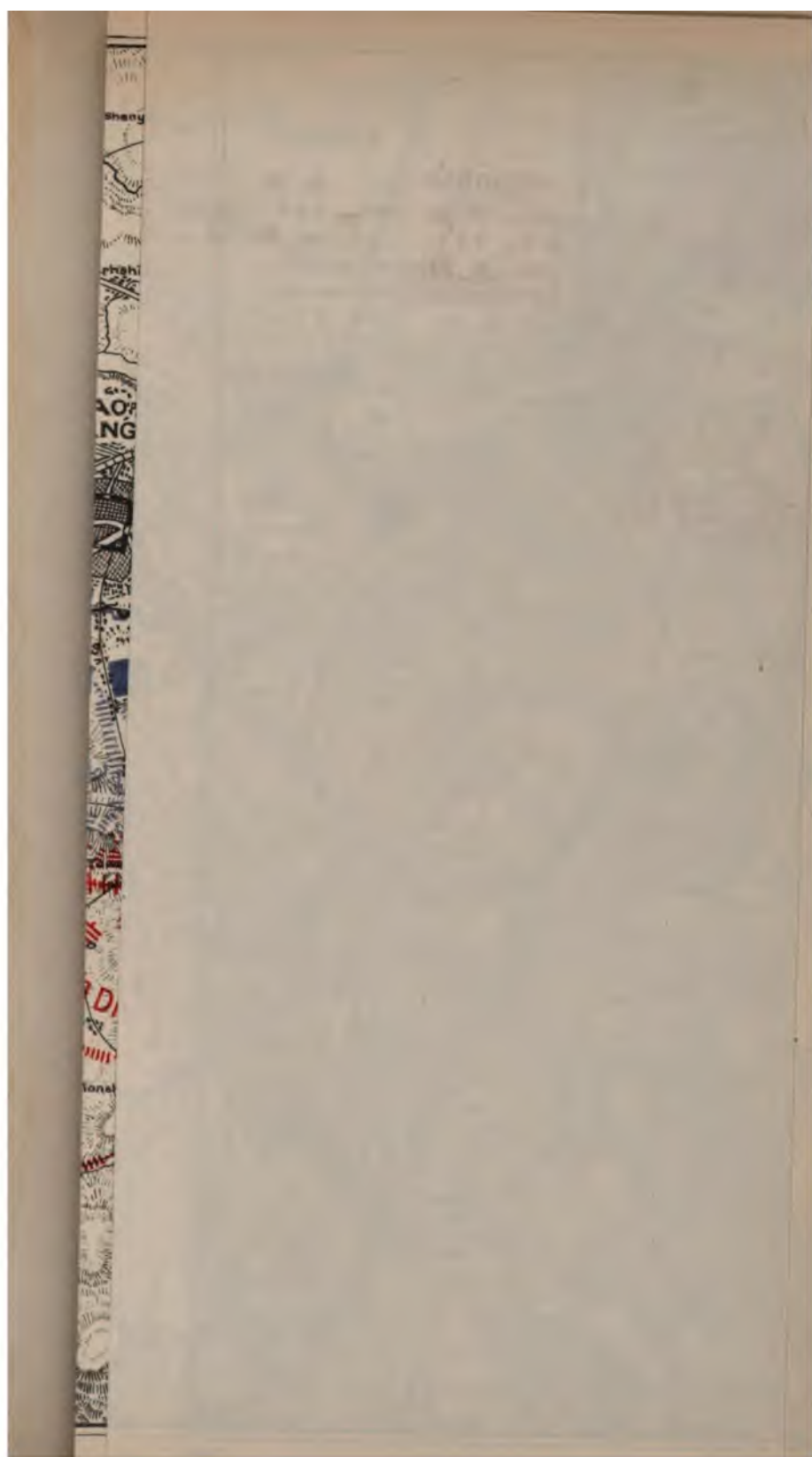
It has been affirmed that the Japanese have recognised that Port Arthur is the key, not only to the naval war, but to the whole campaign on land and sea. It is doubtful whether this has been their view, ardently though possession of the fortress is desired from motives of national pride. The true objective at Port Arthur was neither the town nor the harbour, but the ships, and once the ships were destroyed there was little else to deserve the waste of life of an assault.

We may go even further, and affirm that General Stössel, who has so richly earned his St. George, is equally deserving of the Order of the Rising Sun. Given the ships destroyed, the longer Port Arthur holds out the better for Japan. So long as Port Arthur

is in Russian hands there is no strategic liberty for Russian armies; the line of march is compulsory, and it leads at last to the Kinchou isthmus, which could not be forced by all the might of Russia with Japan in command of the sea.

So long as Port Arthur holds out, its syren voice will attract one Russian army after another into the fatal circle of its malign attraction, there to be dealt with as poor Stackelberg was, by the resistless weight of amphibious force, in a perfect theatre for the exercise of its utmost strength. The soul of Port Arthur is, and always has been, with Kuropatkin's bayonets.

Given the decision to stand and fight a decisive battle at Liauyang, it becomes of interest to examine the tactical aspects of the engagement, and to gather from them the lessons which they appear to convey. The original disposition of the Russian forces first calls for certain remarks. The defence of the southern front was well conceived, and the allotment of three army corps to the more or less passive defence of this line should have been, and indeed proved, ample, especially in view of the strength and dominating character of the ground held, and the security of the wings, resting upon the river on each flank, and specially strengthened on the right by the important works round Liauyang, which resemble in plan the permanent fortification of a hundred years ago. To the north of the river the battery positions on each flank swept the approaches and made all attempts to turn the flanks of the position south of the river impracticable. Despite contrary deductions which may be drawn from Marshal Oyama's earlier despatches from the battle-field, it is hardly possible to doubt that no serious successes were gained by the frontal attack of infantry against the Russian position during the days of August 30 and 31, although at least five divisions with a certain number of reserve brigades, all the reserve of the army, and perhaps 220 guns, were employed with the utmost energy and determination. Nor, again, can it be said that the Second and Fourth Armies scored at





all against the 2nd and 4th Russian Siberians in their trenches encircling Liauyang during the three days September 1 to 3, although by the capture of Shoushan Oyama had secured valuable and elevated positions for his guns. The frontal attack completely failed to penetrate the Russian defences, and nothing but Kuropatkin's order for retreat handed over these positions to the Japanese.

But besides the three army corps in position on the southern front at the opening of the battle, Kuropatkin had under his hand rather more than four other corps and three divisions of Cossacks. The use he made of this important reserve, representing the largest part of his army, is fair matter for criticism. Three of these army corps, less the 54th Division detached to the Yentai Mines, he concentrated about Liauyang—one, the 17th, he placed north of the river on his left, while the cavalry protected his flanks, both Mishchenko and Samsonoff having been allotted duties of a strictly defensive character which had nothing in consonance with the genius of a mounted force.

Kuropatkin never seems to have reckoned upon the passage of the Taitse by the First Army, although it may fairly be said that for weeks previous to the battle this stroke had been expected by every one who was following the incidents of the campaign with close attention. He apparently judged that the Japanese passion for tactics of a drastic order would lead them to hurl themselves upon his southern front, and that then, when they were thoroughly exhausted, he would let slip his reserve and complete their discomfiture. But for Kuroki's march, this anticipation might conceivably have been realised.

This failure to reckon with the obvious course which would present itself to the Japanese was a fatal blemish in Kuropatkin's dispositions. There was no necessity for the massing of three army corps round Liauyang; there was none for the establishment of the 17th Corps in a defensive position round Hsikwantun, while the

allotment of a purely infantry *rôle* to the Cossacks was a very grave blunder. A single army corps as a general reserve for the three holding the southern front was more than enough: a division was ample to hold Liauyang and the second line defences, so long as Shoushan held firm; in the flanking positions north of the river only guns with an escort of infantry were required; Mishchenko's *rôle* among the *kaoliang* and villages west of Shoushan should have been abandoned to the volunteer scouts and railway guards, and this would have sufficed to meet all probable contingencies; finally, the order to Samsonoff to stand fast and hold the Yentai Mines, presuming this precaution was necessary at all, which is doubtful, would have better been confided to Orloff, whose troops were best suited for a purely defensive action.

There is absolutely no reason why Kuropatkin should not have completely satisfied all the most exacting requirements of the pure defensive and still have retained a mobile reserve in his hand of from two to three army corps and the whole of his available Cossacks, and have used all this missile force in such direction as circumstances, or his own inspiration, might have dictated.

The failure to use mounted troops in their proper *rôle* led up directly to the final defeat. Kuroki was permitted to bridge and cross the Taitse without opposition, whereas he should have been watched and fallen upon by the whole of the Cossacks in the field on the first symptom of his movement. The Cossacks were chained to positions, and their mobility was absolutely nullified. The 12th Japanese Division could have been, and should have been, opposed, surrounded, and harassed from the moment it set foot on the north bank of the river, and the mobile reserve of two or three army corps should then have marched at once to crush this important movement before it began to gather headway. There is no reason why Kuropatkin should not have attacked Kuroki with a superiority of three to

one at the very least, and all fresh troops, during the days and nights of September 1, 2, and 3. Neither Bilderling nor Samsonoff took any steps at all when Kuroki was reported on the northern bank; the contingency had not been anticipated, no measures had been designed to meet it, and the initiative of subordinates failed to atone for the want of imagination of the supreme commander.

When Kuroki's movement was reported to Kuropatkin he had two alternatives to select from. He could attack Kuroki and hold the southern armies, or he could take the contrary course. The exhaustion and the failure of the southern armies made an impetuous attack upon them by a fresh reserve, aided by a general advance of the whole Russian line, an operation not without serious chances of success at dawn on September 1. It was possible for Kuropatkin to have collected sufficient troops to check Kuroki's march while this movement was in progress. It was also possible for the Russian commander to continue to hold his position south of the river and oppose Kuroki with superior forces; in this case the employment of fresh troops drawn from the 2nd, 4th, 5th, and 17th Army Corps and the Cossacks was clearly indicated.

Kuropatkin decided to attack Kuroki, and it is probable that his ignorance of the strength of the Japanese First Army and the threatening direction of its movement went for much in his decision. Having made up his mind to this stroke, Kuropatkin further decided upon a course which can with difficulty be justified—namely, to abandon the position on the southern hills, to restrict himself on this side to the defence of Liauyang, and to use troops that had been already severely tried by several days of arduous fighting in his effort against Kuroki.

The evacuation of Shoushan and adjacent positions produced moral results that might have been anticipated. The Japanese army, from the veteran marshal downwards, thought that victory was won, while the Russians were disheartened by the thought that once more all

their gallantry had been useless. If the mechanical part of the transfer of troops to the north bank of the river was well performed, it is also certain that it was much to ask of the 1st and 3rd Siberian Army Corps, after all their labours and heavy losses, to participate at once in the action against Kuroki; and as a matter of fact a Russian officer, in his account of the battle, had to confess as a reason for failure that "our soldiers were falling with fatigue and exhaustion; their nerves failed to perform their duties; we were compelled to take into account this psychological factor." It would have been preferable that account should have been taken of it earlier.

Nevertheless Kuropatkin had at his disposal by midday on September 2, the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 17th Army Corps, besides two Cossack divisions, aligned against Kuroki, who, the same day and hour, had but two divisions and one mixed brigade. The Russian superiority was overwhelming, and the failure of the Japanese guns to answer the cannonade on the afternoon of September 2 might have afforded some indication that the forces under Kuroki were not large. Kuropatkin might have opposed numbers superior to Kuroki at any day and hour from dawn on August 31 to the evening of September 3, but never once was a serious effort made to pursue relentlessly the original plan. The defeat of Orloff, and the imposing appearance of Kuroki's six-mile front, impressed the Russian leader's imagination, and caused him to consider the battle lost when victory was still within his grasp. The same feeling appears to have influenced General Sakharoff, his Chief-of-Staff, who, in his telegram of September 2, after referring to the fighting at Hsikwantun, declares that "we immediately made the discovery that we had to deal with a strong Japanese force with a front extending from the heights at the Yentai Mines to the Taitse River," and he describes Orloff's defeat at the hands of "a superior force in a strong position," whereas Orloff was actually beaten by a single brigade with the utmost ease.

Thus from first to last the Russians defended very well and attacked uncommonly badly; it is not the inertia of a mass that wins battles, but the momentum of weight multiplied by velocity, the whole inspired and directed by a single dominating and inflexible purpose capable of pursuing considerable and decisive aims with the utmost resolution and audacity. There was no such purpose in Kuropatkin's conduct of the battle of Liauyang.

While, then, on the one side, there was a leader incapable of dominating a battlefield and always ready to follow his enemy's lead with submission and humility, there was on the other a leader and a staff imbued with glorious and invincible optimism, with a determination to attack the enemy everywhere and with every unit at command, and to carry through the attack to its uttermost consequences regardless of the sacrifices it might entail. Forces so differently led and inspired were indeed ill-matched. The difference of inspiration was profound, and it was obviously accentuated by the long series of Russian defeats which had caused the Japanese to reckon themselves invincible, and the Russians to become accustomed to retreats.

It is doubtful whether any European commander would have attempted the frontal attack at Liauyang; it is also doubtful whether he would have anticipated success had he attempted it. It is probable that most would have ordered a retreat on the night of August 31, when every unit had been engaged and not a point had been scored. The tenacity of the Japanese under these depressing circumstances, and the unconquerable resolution of commanders to refuse to accept defeat in any guise, must be regarded as a model of action essentially Japanese, and one that should never in future be absent from the mind of troops and leaders similarly circumstanced. It is but another reading of the old adage, "Do not go away, then the enemy will go away."

It is not possible to allege that this frontal attack had no result upon the course of the action, even though

success was not directly obtained. For the *combat d'usure*, half-measures, and finikin tactics of finesse, influence but little the resolution of a warlike enemy. The result of the frontal attack was to wear out and render incapable of any further serious effort the three Russian army corps immediately exposed to the rough treatment of the Japanese. Moreover, part at least of the general reserve was drawn towards the threatened front; the enemy was not beaten, but he was shaken, his resolution affected, and his arrangements disordered. The valour of the Second and Fourth Armies was not expended in pure waste.

But if the Japanese numbers were, on the whole, inadequate for the complete success of the very ambitious plan which had been conceived, then it became all the more necessary that, when the decisive attack was launched, this attack should be able to proceed unchecked and to execute its mission in a rapid and implacable fashion. It was necessary that the subordinate should be sacrificed to the essential, and, as the Japanese could not be strong everywhere, that everything else should give way to the success of Kuroki's movement. In this respect the Japanese plan of battle failed. Only a single division crossed the river on the night of August 30, and even by September 2 there were but two divisions and a half north of the Taitse.

It was not possible to anticipate complete success with such meagre numbers. The Japanese Headquarter Staff should, at least, have enabled Kuroki to act with his united army. Had they done so a very much greater success would almost undoubtedly have been obtained, and, even if the containing attack from the south had been thereby somewhat weakened, there would still have been nothing to prevent it from carrying out the true mission which devolved upon it with the desirable energy, while it would still have been strong enough, if properly disposed, to resist any counter-offensive that Kuropatkin might have been able to

launch against it. The chances always were that, once Kuroki's attack developed, the direction and threatening character attaching to it would attract against it every man Kuropatkin could spare.

Given the wholly inadequate force with which he proceeded upon his task, Kuroki managed his action in a brilliant and highly successful manner. It was necessary that his force should impose upon the enemy, as it could not crush him, and, weak as he was, Kuroki not only contrived to cover a front of six miles and to threaten the line of communications in such manner as to cause Kuropatkin grave anxiety, but also managed to concentrate parts of his force for a series of impetuous attacks by day and night, demolishing Orloff on the right and alarming Stackelberg, driving off Samsonoff, and effecting the capture of Haiyentai in the face of the whole strength of the 17th Army Corps. No troops and no commander could, under the circumstances, have done more or done better.

CHAPTER XXVIII¹

THE GERMANS AT SEA

RUSSIA has had to suffer many a misfortune in the course of the past six months ; not the least of them was to have incurred the military advice of Germany. The domination of Berlin in the realms of military thought has proved nothing but a disadvantage to the Russian Empire, which would have done better to have turned a deaf ear to all the interested promptings from this quarter and to have planned her campaign without their aid, and in accordance with Russian spirit and traditions, based on a better knowledge of the Far East than German soldiers and publicists appear to possess.

It is curious to look back to old files of German newspapers published in the weeks preceding the war, and to observe the totally false views of the whole situation which were either entertained out of downright ignorance or assumed from motives of policy. Russia received great encouragement thereby, and persisted in the line of impolicy she had adopted, despite all the warnings of the British press. When war came, the most authorised exponent of German military views made a calculation as to the rate of reinforcement of the Army of Manchuria, and put forward figures which, had they proved accurate, would have given General Kuropatkin a field army of 400,000 men by this date. We had to observe at the time that the calculation of

¹ From *The Times* of September 13, 1904.

the *Militär Wochenblatt* was devoid of value, since it was obviously a mere school exercise, drawn up without recognition of many important factors.

Nothing was more pathetic than the complaint of the Russian press, after the first defeats, that the reason for these disasters was inexplicable, since the Russian plans were drawn up in accordance with German views, and had received the cordial appreciation of German professors of the art of war. What was not recognised was that German military criticism had fallen into the hands of men without any practical experience of war, than whom no advisers can be blinder or more dangerous guides.

What is the salve that Germany now offers to the wounded prestige of Russia, and how do the German oracles, who foretold that Oyama would assuredly be defeated, explain away their very inaccurate prophecies? It is quite an interesting study to examine this side of the question. The *National-Zeitung* expresses, as we know, the views of the German Government upon occasion, and its words therefore carry such weight as we may attach to their opinions. Of course, says this journal in effect, Russia will go on. Such a great Tsar, such a mighty military Empire, is not going to be beaten by these wretched Japanese. Next year Russia will assemble another great army, and the result of the campaign of 1905 will be very different—very different indeed. But, in case Kuropatkin should make any mistake, the *National-Zeitung* lays down the correct line of advance for this new army. It is to march from Vladivostok upon Korea, and, when it has thrust itself into this open sack, the Japanese are not, of course, at all likely to close the mouth and pull the strings. The new army is to march over a nearly impassable and quite roadless country, devoid of supplies, into a peninsula where there are no Japanese to speak of, in order to attack communications which do not exist; and then, for all the *National-Zeitung* cares, this Russian army, inspired with its German spirit, can run violently down

the steep places of Fusan into the sea and perish in the waters. Such is the alluring prospect held out by the Gadarene strategists of Berlin.

The joys of a march in North-Eastern Korea have been recently described by Captain Eletse, of the Russian Guards, in the pages of the *Novoe Vremya*. This officer was on General Rennenkampf's staff, whose mission earlier in the war in this district we ventured to describe at the time as an aimless ramble. Captain Eletse's experiences were unpleasant; there were no roads to speak of, there were no supplies, neither was there any forage. The Cossacks eked out their infrequent rations by roots and berries, while the Cossack ponies quietly starved; but, as Captain Eletse declares that the latter had little endurance to start with and that most of them had been taken out of the shafts, their loss was perhaps not a great disaster. Altogether the district appears to be very unsuitable for the purposes of the new army, and, as this line of advance will have the sea on one flank, and eventually on both, and leaves the Japanese army in the rear, it requires all the hardihood of German suggestion to propose it.

But, if we hark back a few months, this sage advice of the German organ appears in a somewhat different light. Can we not all recall the naïve confession of intense relief, the pæan of joy, which the *National-Zeitung* so unguardedly uttered when the die was cast in February last? The argument then was that the fearful nightmare of a war on two fronts, which had haunted the mind of every intelligent German for years past, was removed. It was Russia who was now cursed by the dread spectre, and the German organ did not fail to point out the intense relief afforded by the fact.

When France and England discovered that the almost trivial points which divided them were capable of arrangement by mutual goodwill and mutual concessions, the Bismarckian policy had lived, and no organ of the German Press was more alive to the fact than the *National-Zeitung*. The purely military gain of

France from this arrangement was immense. France had no hope whatever of carrying on successful war in Europe without a free sea, and only friendship with England could secure it. It was the free sea that enabled her to carry on a great patriotic struggle for so long against Prussia when the Imperial army was struck down. Every page of the inquiry after the war makes the fact manifest. Thanks to the renewal of cordial relations with England and Italy, the military situation in France has immensely improved. There are 200,000 men allotted by the French plans of mobilisation to coast defence, and the greater part of these are set free. There are 100,000 French troops over-sea in colonies and dependencies: these also are now available, and all the resources of these possessions are at the disposal of France in time of war. Lastly, the magnificent army of the Alps, not less than 250,000 strong, is no longer chained to the Italian frontier. It is therefore correct to say that the wise policy of M. Delcassé has added half a million men to the French army at the decisive point—wherever that may be—and has done more for the security of France than all the military reforms of the preceding decade.

In these circumstances the Far-Eastern adventure of Russia was indeed glad tidings of great joy to the General Staff at Berlin, promising as it did to engage the whole military attention of Russia for many years, to damage her prestige and weaken her resources, restoring once more to Germany the hope of acquiring that hegemony in Western Europe to which she had aspired. It became a German interest to assist and encourage Russia in her distant enterprise by every means that would keep within the four corners of a very superficial neutrality, and, if the Admiral of the Pacific was driven from the sea allotted to him by Berlin, and his ships were turned into scrap iron, the Admiral of the Atlantic gained nothing but profit; in Northern Europe, at least, the German navy was expected to reign supreme.

The control of many organs of so-called public opinion abroad by Berlin enables Germany continuously to pervert British views, and to place them before Russian readers in the most unfavourable light. No mistake could be greater than to suppose Englishmen desire to see Russia bled to death in this war, or that they have any feelings of hostility towards the Russian people. On the contrary, if Russia, after an honourable peace with Japan, would only abandon once and for all her aggressive policy in Asia, respect the integrity of China and other states, and enter into an agreement with us as her ally has done, we should wish her well, and the two countries would become fast friends, to their very great and mutual advantage. The weakening of Russian military power in Europe to the point of exhaustion on sea and land is no military interest of ours, since it tends to upset the balance of power in the West, and history shows that, when any Power aspires to hegemony in Western Europe, and attains to it, our hostility follows as a matter of course. The histories of Philip of Spain, of Louis XIV., and of Napoleon are there to point the moral which none can miss.

German military advice throughout this war has been consistently wrong; it has not been worth the paper on which it has been printed. The whole of the world-famous great General Staff has been completely at fault—all, at least, save Meckel, who was almost alone in his firm belief in Japanese success. He was the only man who knew, and no one in Germany listened to him. We have heard a good deal of Count von Pfeil during the war, and we have been compelled to listen to his tales in the *Lokalanzeiger* foretelling the doom of the Japanese, and concluding by the bald statement that Oyama at Liauyang would infallibly be defeated. "Port Arthur," declared this shining light of the General Staff, "will hold out against the Japanese, and Oyama in a short time will be beaten by Kuropatkin in the decisive battle. That is my firm conviction." We had, indeed, to sound a warning that these prophecies need

cause us no disquiet. It is curious to see how this high authority escapes from the dilemma in which he now finds himself. It is quite simple. Kuropatkin, he says, trusted to the aid of Linievitch, and it was entirely owing to the failure of Linievitch to come up that the battle was lost. Our mentor might as truly have said that Jena and Auerstadt were lost because the Prussian garrison of Königsberg did not attack Napoleon or Davoust.

Linievitch has a separate command in the Maritime Province, with frontiers elaborately mapped out by the Viceroy and all railways and waterways carefully partitioned off, so that there may be no jealousy. He has charge of Vladivostok, the last foothold of Russia on the Pacific, other than points which will fall whenever the Japanese care to attack them, and has only the 8th, and perhaps one other, East Siberian Division, some fortress troops, and Cossacks, besides possibly a few Siberian regiments and the Orenburg Cossack Division, which have not yet been located. Vladivostok may now be attacked at any hour, and it is not the moment when Linievitch can profitably march away with his troops; moreover, he is 500 miles from the scene of battle as the crow flies, or 700 by railway. To accuse Linievitch of any share of responsibility in the defeat at Liauyang is the most ridiculous piece of nonsense to which even German military criticism has hitherto descended.

It would be interesting to know what the German military attaché with Kuropatkin has to say about the events of the past six months. At the beginning of the war this officer gave his views to a correspondent of the *Éclair*, which has a curious practice of reflecting German views. "The value of the Japanese army," declared this accomplished officer, "has been greatly exaggerated." "It was impossible," he added, "for any one thoroughly acquainted with the two forces to doubt the superiority of the Russians." He believed that there would be no battle of any consequence before August, when "the Russian victories will certainly cool

the ardour of the Japanese and bring the war to a speedy close." During the deplorable incidents of the retreat from Liauyang this officer will have had time to weigh his opinions, and we can hardly doubt that his new experience of war will be of great professional advantage to him and to the Far Eastern section of the great General Staff, which stands in obvious need of drastic reforms.

Of other Germans at the front, Colonel Gädke is the best-quoted, and perhaps the most intelligent. Like all his compatriots, he has, of course, been dead out of reckoning. Scarcely a single forecast he has made has been verified by events. At the same time we cannot avoid a certain regard for Gädke, since his manner of evading the Russian censor is quite a model of ingenuity, while his happy turn of phrase is very original and quaint. The German colonel, though a most indifferent prophet, is a shrewd judge of what passes under his eyes, and his skill in hoodwinking the censor is remarkable. His story, some little time ago, that Kuropatkin, with forty battalions, had advanced from Tashihchiao and had recaptured the Taling by a glorious attack was allowed to pass, as are all accounts of Russian victories. Gädke probably trusted to his readers to discount the victory and to hold fast to the information that Kuropatkin and the main body of the army were at Tashihchiao, information which was decidedly of importance at the time it was sent. His description of the perversity of Russian positions in Manchuria, which, he says, are enormously strong when first reconnoitred and become dreadfully weak when occupied by the Russian army, was also a ponderous sarcasm that the censor could not understand and so allowed to pass. Gädke seems, in short, to constitute himself the faithful chronicler of events that he sees and of opinions that he hears, and if, very often, he seems to be extraordinarily short-sighted and misinformed, he not improbably reflects, and deliberately reflects, the views prevailing in the army around him.

All German opinions concerning the future are so totally devoid of serious value that we wonder what has become of the great school of Moltke. Was Meckel, and is now the Japanese army, the last depository of its secrets? To those who have kept their finger on the pulse of foreign armies during recent years, the decadence of German military criticism comes by no means as a surprise. Certain Western armies began to lose something of their fine point in the early nineties of last century; a long peace and the wearisome round of barrack-yard routine produced their inevitable results.

One minor point upon which we may lightly touch is the question of decorations, which may seem trivial, but is less so than it seems. Nothing causes more astonishment to the insular Briton when travelling abroad than to see individuals, of all ranks and professions, including policemen, appearing at state functions with rows upon rows of medals and decorations, upon which all the animals that took refuge with Noah in the Ark, and some others, are successively represented. Many, if not most, of the recipients are known to be persons of peaceable pursuits, and nearly all have seen nothing of war. Rewards which a wise policy would confine to those who risk their lives and their health on the field of battle—for they are, in all conscience, cheap enough in return for such services—are prodigally scattered amongst courtiers, placemen, and tuft-hunters of all classes and all sexes. This system, founded on a correct knowledge of the illimitable vanity of human nature, is a lapse from sense. If officers, whose sole ambition should be success in arms, find that they can become resplendent and can gratify all their vanity by Jubilee parades, attendance upon foreign potentates, and other duties savouring of the courtier, the policeman, or the lackey, the greatest incentive to professional study and to participation in active service is lost. No officer in uniform should be permitted, at any time, to wear decorations not won by actual presence

and good service on the field of battle, and wise will be the head of the state and his advisers, whether in Germany or elsewhere, who returns to that healthy tradition.

When British officers visited foreign manoeuvres they certainly found much to learn, particularly in mass movements and staff work; but the tactics appeared more suitable for other arms and other ages than for the conditions of to-day. Those British officers who learnt Russian and exiled themselves to complete their knowledge of the language found little indeed in Russian military literature to tempt them to prosecute their studies. Russia was behind Central Europe, and the latter, again, was already out of date.

For all these reasons the touching confidence of the Russian people and of the Russian General Staff in German advice and opinion appears to be somewhat misplaced. All the mistakes Russia has committed in the realm of politics and of war on sea and land have been pointed out in *The Times*, and in other organs of British and American opinion, long before the effects followed the causes; in ample time, indeed, for Russia to have recovered her positions and to have escaped her disasters, had she paid the slightest heed to the warnings given to her. Even in this culminating disaster of Liauyang, we long ago pointed out the risk of employing reserve troops against such an enemy as Japan, but the rout of Orloff's division of the 5th Corps was required to drive the point home. The conduct of the 5th Corps, we are told, provokes violent criticism. That is most unfair, since the composition of these militia elements never justified their employment at the front, and it is only the conduct of the Russian War Office that calls for animadversion.

We showed that the attack on the southern front of Kuropatkin's position would fall on his left, as proved to be the case, and we described Kuroki's passage of the Taitse and his probable action against the Russian rear a month before it occurred. We also ventured to

warn the Russian commander that he did not yet understand the military value of the Japanese army, even if he knew its numbers. Could Russia's best friend do more? We were inflicting no injury upon our ally in these forecasts, since autocracy and all its agents conspire to keep the Russians in the dark, and it was certain that everything calculated to inform and enlighten the Russian people would be blacked out of the columns of *The Times* by the censor, and that the latter was not likely to be an individual with the capacity of understanding either the military or any other situation. Summing up all this side of the question, our advice to Russia would be to pay no more attention to German opinion, unless she desires that worse things may befall her and her French ally than yet have happened.

CHAPTER XXIX¹

WAR AND FINANCE

THE cost of modern war is not light, and when the campaign is fought out 5,000 miles from the heart of an empire it is not lightened.

We know to our cost that we cannot maintain 300,000 men in the field in South Africa at a less expenditure than a million and a quarter a week, even given the business aptitudes of our people and the almost unimpeachable honesty of all branches of the administration. What is the war costing Russia and Japan?

As regards our ally, considerations of finance have from the first received as close attention as the armed forces of the State themselves. Iron and gold weigh equally in military scales, and it is the particular merit of Japan that she has prepared herself to face a long and arduous struggle, not only by intelligent use of army and navy, but also by the most economical gestion of her national resources. Those acquainted with the financiers of modern Japan believe them to be as accomplished in their branch, and as efficient, as the fighting services are in theirs. The annual expenditure of Japan amounts to £25,000,000 sterling in a normal year; her debt at the outbreak of war was only £56,000,000, and but a part of this was held abroad. Russia, on the other hand, has a budget showing £232,000,000 on the side of expenditure, and a debt of £707,851,930, requiring an annual payment of

¹ From *The Times* of September 15, 1904.

£31,000,000—the so-called “gold subsidy”—of which at least £20,000,000 have to be paid annually to foreign bankers, mainly French, since France holds at least one-half of the Russian debt. The Russian budget shows an expenditure of £1 17*s.* per head of population; that of Japan about 10*s.* The Japanese army costs about £4,000,000 a year; that of Russia ten times as much. The Japanese navy costs £3,000,000 a year; that of Russia four times the amount. If the successes of Japan represent a great military achievement, they are also a financial marvel.

If it be objected that, in the recent loan raised abroad, Japan consented to very onerous terms, it must be recalled that the arrangements were practically concluded before the first collision between the land forces, and that, until Japan had proved herself a match for Russia on shore, it was only natural that foreign financiers should hesitate to commit themselves except on their own terms.

The last war with China cost Japan £30,000 a day, and, in view of the greater effort of the present campaign, it is calculated that she is now spending £100,000 daily, or, roughly speaking, £3,000,000 a month. During the war with China the total expenditure from June, 1894, to November, 1896, amounted to 200,475,508 yen, of which only 35,955,137 yen were on account of the navy. This expenditure was met by 116,804,926 yen subscribed to public loans and by 78,957,165 yen from the indemnity fund, besides some small private contributions, receipts from the occupied territories, and the Treasury surplus. The *maximum* monthly expenditure at the height of the war never reached 20,000,000 yen, and the average daily cost during 1894 and 1895 works out to the figure already given, the yen being taken at 2*s.* 0½*d.*

The daily average of £100,000 is necessarily only an approximation, and will obviously be subject to expansion or contraction with the ebb and flow of the tide of success, and with the increase or decrease

of numbers in the field. It is probable that during the last few weeks, when Japan has placed over 300,000 men in the field, and has made such a considerable effort, the figure has been exceeded. It may also be observed that practically nothing is known in Europe concerning the Japanese plans for the creation of reserve field armies with the aid of the very numerous trained men that have been passed through the ranks, and that, should the occasion appear to demand it, a much larger number of men can be drawn forward to the theatre of war than any estimates hitherto published would seem to indicate. Such supplementary mobilisation on a large scale would naturally entail a corresponding increase of expense, but there is nothing as yet to indicate any serious, or, at all events, fatal defect in the general plan of campaign, or consequently any immediate need to draw heavily upon these reserves of strength. Moreover, modern organisation, as Japan understands it, provides a great number of men who incur the liability, but escape the actual duty, of colour service. In Japan, these men, who are allocated to certain categories of the reserve, but are not trained soldiers, have been called upon to serve as coolies, and a human transport corps has been created, which costs the country nothing but its rations and its infinitesimal pay.

Every coolie employed by Russia in Manchuria costs hard cash, and in time of war the cost of labour, other, of course, than the *corvée*, amounts to four or five times the figure of times of peace. It is not prudent to resort to forced labour when an army depends so largely upon the goodwill, or at least the passive neutrality, of a native population; nor can coolie labour be dispensed with in a mountainous district, if the military administration has not foreseen and provided an adequate transport corps of its own.

For these reasons, amongst others, Russia will necessarily incur greater expense upon the theatre of operations than Japan, while her line of operations

is immensely longer, and consequently more costly to maintain. It is true that the Trans-Siberian is a government undertaking, and that the cost of transport will not represent all that visible drain upon the Treasury that ours had to bear for the hiring of ships and demurrage. But the wear and tear will be very great, and the indispensable expenditure upon rolling stock, rails, and the up-keep or improvement of the permanent way will be very heavy. Again, the mobilisation of the Baltic squadron, whether it results in a cruise to the East or not, entails heavy outlays, as does the purchase of potential cruisers in Germany and their equipment and supply, while in many other directions expenditure will mount up, probably with excessive rapidity, owing to the dishonesty of Russian methods of administration.

Russia has invested a great many millions sterling in her Pacific squadron which hardly seem destined to pay much interest. She is not only faced with the task of practically rebuilding a fleet, but also has to bear the cost of raising and maintaining troops at home to take the place of those sent out to the East. Almost every week there are fresh calls upon reserves to take the places of troops despatched to the front. Since the war began six army corps have also been successively mobilised to reinforce the army in Manchuria, and every day the cost of this army grows, and incidental expenditure of all kinds increases in volume. So long as only Boxers were to be encountered, the Russians could pretend they had 200,000 men in the field, and could charge the Chinese with the cost of their maintenance at the settlement, in the manner exposed in March, 1904, by the Peking correspondent of *The Times*. It did not matter then, in a military sense, that not one-quarter of these numbers were really present; but it does matter now, and Russians have to bear the cost in the long run, even if foreign countries find the money for the moment.

M. Lévy, the French financial authority, calculated

in June, 1904, that the direct additional cost of the war to Russia was between £6,000,000 and £7,000,000 sterling a month. The strain has been largely increased during the past three months owing to disasters on land and sea, and we shall be well within the mark if we estimate the cost of the war to Russia at £8,000,000 a month for the maintenance of 300,000 men in the field in East Asia, and the execution of all measures of preparation in the West. If larger numbers are drawn forward, or even only concentrated in rear, west of Baikal, a corresponding increase of expenditure will undoubtedly follow.

This figure is certainly a moderate estimate, and it is thought by some authorities entitled to respect that it should be put very much higher. What percentage of the sum expended is never applied to the purposes for which it is granted no one can say, but the irregularities of the Russian administration are so notorious that it is probably high. When Russian authorities of high standing can charge their government with the cost of the best Welsh steam coal, and ship inferior Japanese, making thousands on the transaction, everything becomes possible—everything, at least, except naval efficiency.

Russian finance is a much too tangled skein for any one to unravel who is not to the manner born; yet certain things are known which are interesting as indications. The last Russian bank return at the outbreak of war showed £74,500,000 sterling in gold in reserve and £17,750,000 at call abroad, or a total of £92,000,000. As against this there was, up to that time, a total note issue of £68,000,000, which, according to the rules hitherto enforced by ukase, required a gold backing of £38,000,000, since notes up to the limit of £60,000,000 have to be covered by 50 per cent. in gold, and above that number in full. According to the most trustworthy information based upon Russian data, the State Bank quite recently held £95,000,000 sterling in gold in reserve or at call abroad, whilst the note issue amounted to £77,000,000,

which required on the same principle a gold backing of £47,000,000, and still left power to effect a legitimate note issue of £48,000,000 altogether.

When hostilities broke out, three means existed for increasing to any great extent the financial resources for the prosecution of war, other than internal economies, which could not effect much, and have mainly resulted in a large increase of the unemployed. Loans, internal and external, could be raised, or fresh issues of notes could be made, unbacked by gold reserves; finally, taxation could be increased and expenditure diminished. All three means were certain in the long run to depreciate Russian stocks and Russian credit. Financial authorities felt sure that no loan would be raised abroad, and in this event Russia appeared to possess the financial power of carrying on the war for six months by the process of note issue against gold reserves, under the provisions of existing ukases. If Russia had felt any certainty of compassing the defeat of her enemy with 300,000 men, and within these limits of time, she would probably have aligned herself with the opinions of financial experts, and have scouted the idea of a foreign loan. But if she foresaw, on the other hand, no certain issue of the struggle, and decided that, after the exhaustion of legitimate paper issues, she would either have to approach lenders *in formâ pauperis* or issue paper without metal backing, it was natural that she should go to the foreign market first and drink at that well as long as the water lasted, leaving herself the home supply as a last resort when all other means of raising money failed.

From a military point of view, which is all we are here concerned with, that was sound financial strategy, as it reserved to herself the metal, and even increased it, while leaving to the foreign bondholder the pleasure of paying the cost not only of the war, but of the depreciation of Russian credit which was certain to follow unsuccessful, or even long-continued, war. Russian defeats caused the negotiators of the recent loan to close

quickly with the foreign bankers, for fear that worse might befall and the terms become more onerous. Rumours of fresh loans are already in the air, and the war will probably continue for just so long as France can bear the strain, or Germany can be induced to take up the burden, should it prove excessive for French shoulders.

The French view appears to be that Russia can carry on for another few months from the present date by the help of the £32,000,000 of French money, and that then she will probably go to the German bankers, having secured their support by bribing the German Government with the favourable commercial treaty which was concluded by M. Witte with Count von Bülow last July. In this case we are bound to observe that the same two Powers that deprived Japan of the fruits of her victory in 1894 by the machinery of their diplomacy will have entered the lists on Russia's side under the thin disguise of a financial syndicate, as Germany has already done in the guise of a ship-broker, and that it will be then legitimate for the group of Powers whose cause Japan champions to take corresponding action and back their fancy in a similar way. Thus we shall all be engaged in war by proxy. What the reflex action of such procedure may be upon the money markets of the world no one, perhaps, can fully gauge, but it will decidedly offer no hope of any improvement in the somewhat gloomy situation of to-day. Practically the nations affording financial support to one combatant or the other are themselves taking part in the war in an unofficial manner; and, if their governments intervene to encourage bankers to pursue their present course, fatal as it seems to the real interests of the world's commerce, the intervention assumes an official character, and for practical purposes becomes identical with an alliance backed by subsidies. Is this really what Europe and America desire or intend?

It is too early to estimate the economic results of the war upon the internal situation of the two empires.

since so much depends upon the duration of hostilities and their result. But there is this to be considered, that the exports and imports of Japan during the first eight months of 1904 show a remarkable increase over the corresponding period of 1903, itself a bumper year, and that in Russia the reverse has occurred. The Japanese official returns disclose that for the eight months ended on August 31 last the foreign trade shows a surplus over the corresponding months of 1903 of 19,000,000 yen (£1,900,000). This, despite the fact that shipping entering and clearing in Japanese bottoms has fallen away, owing to the demands of military transport over-sea.

In Manchuria prices have naturally risen enormously, while in Russia itself there is evidence of increasing dearness in articles of primary necessity. There is a great restriction of credit and a desire on all sides to accumulate and hoard metal. On all sides, also, we hear of employers reducing the hours of labour and, with them, wages. Diminution of wages reacts in the form of diminution of demand, and consequently of production. If the war continues for long, if many more troops have to be sent out, and particularly if military disasters recur, confidence will steadily diminish and the crisis become more acute. If the somewhat privileged situation of Russia allows her to escape the danger of a sudden, very acute, and very damaging crisis, the war has certainly a serious and notable influence upon all classes, and Russia's complaint that her present troubles are due to speculators hardly appears to take into account the inevitable concordance between cause and effect. We have had to notice the same failure to grasp the essential conditions of affairs in the realms of Russian diplomacy and strategy ; the policy, therefore, is all of a piece.

Thanks to the great work of MM. Wyschnegradsky and Witte, Russia was better prepared financially than in other respects to confront a long war. The Bank of Russia, from the point of view of metallic resources,

was in a stronger situation than in any other similar establishment in the world. Yet Russian credit has gone down by one-fifth, and the loan raised some months ago in Paris will practically have cost Russia 6 per cent. The large new loan which is said to be in contemplation in Germany will probably cost more.

Whether France has been wise, in her own interests, in contributing to the finances of the war is a matter that mainly concerns her, and no one else. Yet some of her statesmen must have very serious qualms when they regard the vast sums that Russia has drawn from French savings during the last few years, and must ask themselves whither this dance of millions is leading them. No Frenchman or German can fail to perceive that the ultimate enmity of the somewhat impressionable Japanese public is certain to follow the discovery that the resistance of Russia is continued by reason of French or German backing. The concentration of French hoardings in the hands of a foreign government carried on without serious sense of responsibility, as the events of this year have proved, and their employment upon unproductive and necessarily sterile war, seems a poor use for national capital, no matter what the result of the war may be.

Not only is France herself less able to improve her own position at home and to find new outlets in the markets of the world, but her ally becomes less and less a source of strength as her resources diminish and the future is discounted. It is bad enough to have lost the aid of the Russian navy, but it is much worse for Russia to become so exhausted as to be incapacitated from waging a great war for many years. The political danger is even greater than the financial, and both are serious. It is certainly a German interest that the war should continue indefinitely, but is it to the interest either of Russia or of France?

As for Germany, this Power, by allowing herself to become involved in the war as Russia's backer, has launched herself upon a dangerous and an inclined plane.

If Japan has not taken the offensive in finance, that is no reason why the proposition should not be considered in relation to national wars. Just as questions of the feeding of children of the poorer classes, housing, the physical training of the people and food supplies in time of war are all eventually translated by success or failure on the field of battle, so finance itself deserves a place, and a very important place, in the studies of what are known as defence problems. This place it has never obtained in England, and, until it does, we shall not only continue to secure less safety and stability in business than we ought to possess, but also lose an auxiliary arm which we are pre-eminently fitted to employ with deadly effect in favour of our allies and against an enemy that challenges us to battle.

CHAPTER XXX¹

JAPANESE LINES OF COMMUNICATION

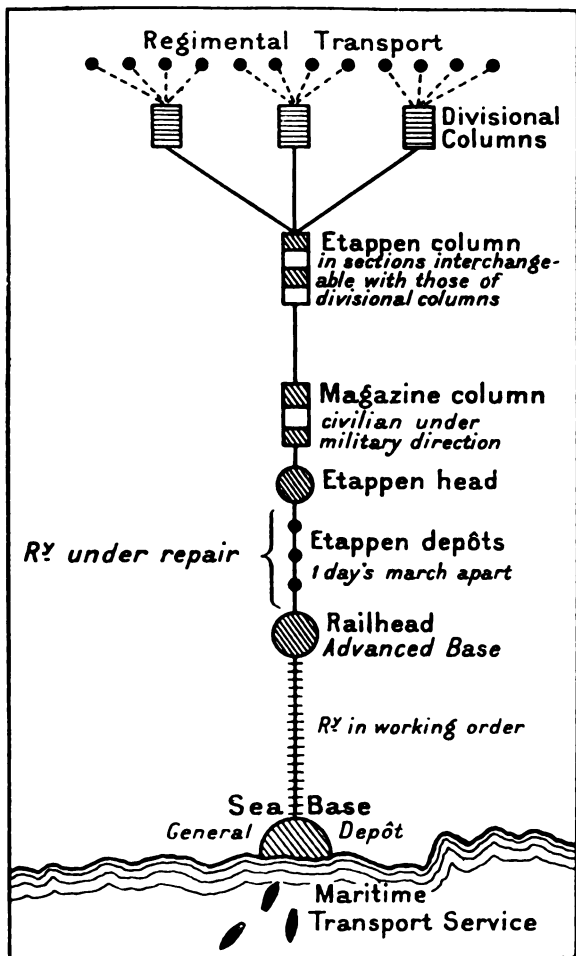
THE special correspondent of *The Times* with the Japanese army has recently touched on the very important question of lines of communication, and has given us some instructive details on the subject. We have had to pay so many compliments to the direction of the Trans-Siberian Railway during recent months that it is perhaps only fitting to glance for a moment at the organisation of the rearward services of the Japanese army, in their turn, and to see how closely the best models of Europe have been followed.

It would be difficult to over-rate the importance of a thoroughly modern and well-ordered system of communications, and all soldiers who have been players in the great and supremely fascinating game of strategy, or even pawns on the strategic chessboard, are well aware what a large share of the anxieties of a commander is necessarily given to these important considerations.

So little is known of the machinery of the Japanese *services de l'arrière* that it will perhaps be advisable to give a diagram illustrating the principles which govern the organisation of this highly important part of the military organisation of our ally.

The best means of explaining this system is to begin with the private soldier, and to work down through the various agencies of the supply service to the sea-base.

¹ *The Times*, September 24, 1904



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The infantry soldier in the Japanese army is as much overweighted as in Europe. He carries, all told, nearly 57 lb., and it is a generally accepted principle in the army that man or animal can carry about one-third of his or its weight.

As a rule, the Japanese private carries with him the day's rations and two days' emergency rations. When these fail he has to fall back upon the regimental transport, which is supposed to carry never less than one day's supplies.

The Japanese regimental transport consists of a column of pack-horses and light carts, except in the hills, where the military coolie corps takes its place. This transport is found by the train battalion of the division; but it remains permanently attached to the regiment it serves, and is under the orders of the regimental commander. In matters of promotion, interior economy, and so forth, it comes under the commanding officer of the train. This transport is so divided up that, if a battalion or company is detached, a section or sub-section of the regimental transport accompanies the detachment. In case of absolute necessity the regimental transport can be pooled and allotted to other pressing needs, but this is rarely done, and it remains almost always at the service of the regiment. It carries baggage, cooking utensils, tools, medical stores, ammunition, and litters, as well as food.

In rear of the regimental transport there follows the divisional supply column with four or more days' rations. All corps and services are informed where this column will park at the end of the day's march, and from this point the regimental transport fills up and returns to the front. The divisional column is found by the train; it is divided into sections, and as each section is emptied of supplies it drops to the rear and joins the so-called *étappen* column, which sends on one of its sections to take the vacant place in the divisional supply column. Thus the divisional and *étappen* column sections are interchangeable, and the constant

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presence of supplies at the front is assured under ordinary conditions.

Behind these *échelons* of supply there comes what is known as the magazine column, under military direction, but usually formed by requisitioned transport, whether coolies, pack animals, or carts and horses. This column has the duty of filling up the empty sections of the *étappen* column, and the number of days' rations carried in it varies according to circumstances.

If the railhead is close in rear of the army, the magazine column fills up at this point, or similarly from any *depôt* on a river line favourably situated. As a rule, however, there is a greater or less extent of road between railhead and the zone of active operations, and along this, at intervals of one day's march, are stationed *étappen* *depôts*, the most advanced of which is the *étappen* roadhead, where the magazine column makes good its deficiencies. The carriage of supplies between the *étappen* *depôts* is allotted to local transport, which remains in its own district, and works forward and back upon a single stage of the line. This leads to some waste of tissue in constant loading and unloading ; but the advantage of retaining the local transport in its own district is held to counterbalance this disadvantage.

Alongside of these road-stages the railway, if one exists, is repaired ; if not, a light line is laid if possible. Everything is done to complete the railway up to the zone of active operations with the least possible delay. At railhead there is an advanced base, the size of which is entirely determined by circumstances ; while at the seaport there is a general *depôt*, served from Japan by the maritime transport service. The whole of the line of communications, from the head of the *étappen* column to the sea-base inclusive, is under a general officer. On the army headquarters staff the second or sub-chief of the staff issues the instructions of the general in command.

Those who are intimately acquainted with the organisation of foreign armies will, of course, recognise

that there is nothing very original in all this system, which is much the same in principle as that adopted by all the Great Powers. Nevertheless, its adaptation to Japanese uses is one proof the more of how thoroughly the Japanese Staff has absorbed the best ideas of its foreign instructors.

We have only outlined the general principle; the application varies almost infinitely. For instance, if there are several parallel roads or river lines leading to the front, all would be used, and, if more than one sea-base or railway are available—for example, Dalny and Niuchwang—both would naturally come into play. Again, if more than one army had to be supplied by a single railway and *étappen* line, then the working staff would be increased, and the size of the échelons of the supply services in rear of the divisional columns would naturally be augmented.

Special troops are told off to the line of communications, and come under the command of the general officer above named.

Incidentally, an examination of this system will make clear to the lay mind the advantage possessed by the army on the defensive or retiring, in matters of supply, since it has its railhead always in its midst and has no pressing need for all those organs which are so indispensable to an advancing and mobile army. But, if the general on the defensive wishes to pass to the attack, then, unless he has a well-stored advanced base and all these échelons of mobile supplies ready to hand, he is tied down to the distance which he can place between his troops and his railhead without risk of starvation. That distance is the limit of his tether, and he is as much restricted to it as a browsing goat to the circle round its stick.

In Manchuria the harvest this year has been so plenteous that considerable forces can live on the country except in the mountain region; but large armies of 200,000 and 300,000 men require such an infinity of things which no pastoral or agricultural

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country can produce that they are practically tied to the railway, unless they have the mobile supply columns of the Japanese service, or something resembling them.

For instance, Kuropatkin will not find growing in Manchuria the shells, rifles, small-arm ammunition, or the waggon and intrenching tools, that he lost at Liauyang. To take only one item, we should say that the 24,194 intrenching tools captured by the Japanese may very well have represented one-third of the total number at disposal, and in any case all the spoils of Liauyang, save the supplies, can only be made good by the railway and from Western Russia. As an old Turk very truly remarked at the Shipka Pass, "It is a long way to bring a shell from Russia."

In every supply service worthy of the name the great guiding principle is to make use of all local resources as though nothing was to be expected from the base, and to send up supplies from the base as though nothing was to be drawn from the country. By these means a large reserve is gradually formed, the strategic liberty of armies assured, and the food, forage, and transport belonging to the theatre of war are withdrawn from the clutch of the enemy.

It was the neglect of this principle in South Africa, particularly with regard to remounts, that cost the taxpayer many millions. It is needless to say that all these arrangements demand and imply business habits and honesty in the administrations concerned. For instance, if the chief authorities, and even commanders of squadrons and companies, are mainly concerned to make money and feather their own nests, they draw money in place of rations, pocket the cash, and allow their men to forage or starve. Indiscriminate foraging and failure to pay for supplies will make a rich country a desert in a remarkably short space of time. That has always been the Russian system, and even in a country flowing with milk and honey it does not conduce to military efficiency.

There is another question of special interest in this campaign in the same general order of ideas—namely,

the gauge of the railways. The Russian 5-ft. railway gauge has its advantages, but also its defects. The Japanese have altered that part of the line now in their possession to 3 ft. 6 in., and have sawn off the sleepers, so that they may be useless to the Russians in the event of a Japanese retirement. All this question has been long ago studied by Intelligence branches worth their salt, and the action of Japan was foreseen. It has, indeed, been suggested that, should the Russians resume the offensive and desire to use the railway as now modified by the Japanese, it would be possible for them to relay the sleepers longitudinally instead of transversely, and so resume traffic without delay. It is, however, doubtful whether a line so laid would commend itself to a traffic manager.

It is hardly necessary to state that the medical, ordnance, and other services have their share in this intelligent organisation of the lines of communication, and that the provision of drafts from the home depôts to make good losses in the field proceeds automatically on the same general lines.

CHAPTER XXXI¹

THE SITUATION AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER

THE military situation in Manchuria at this moment is not altogether without elements of anxiety for our allies. If they are numerous, confident, and determined, it is also true that the general aspect of the campaign is not now quite the same as before Kuropatkin's timely escape from his enemy's grasp at Liauyang.

Up to September 1 the Japanese were in a position to gain the full advantage of their admirable strategy, attained partly by patient and cautious leading and partly by the blindness and passivity of their foe. That great advantage they have now lost; politically and strategically the victory of Liauyang, though a military achievement of the utmost gallantry, was a *coup manqué*. The two armies now face north and south, and each covers its line of communications. The strategic advantages within the zone of active operations are now equal, and can only be regained by tactical expedients.

The Russians still retain their card of re-entry so long as they hold Tieling, and Tieling is not an easy place to take. Moreover, we have long ago pointed out that Prince Khilkoff, the Russian Minister of Ways and Communications, was a more dangerous enemy for Japan than Kuropatkin himself. Khilkoff could get his ideas carried out; Kuropatkin, with inferior tools, could not. This Minister, very early in the war, dis-

¹ From *The Times* of September 23 and 26, 1904.

played intelligent energy, and we had to label him "dangerous." He not only knew what to do, but—rarest of gifts—he knew how to do it, and the railway troops and *employés* under him proved their competence from the very start.

The railway administration has entirely disabused our minds of faith in the very misleading assurances given before the war by a British officer of Engineers, of some experience in railway work, to the effect that the Trans-Siberian would break down under the stress of continuous traffic. On the contrary, it has steadily improved. Many months ago we had to point out that, although our estimate of from four to six military trains a day represented, so far as we could judge, the actual traffic on the line, we should be compelled continually to alter these figures owing to the work in progress, and we mentioned the month of August as the time when Japan would be compelled to increase largely her military forces in Manchuria in order to cope successfully with the growing facilities of Russian transport.

Official estimates are wanting, but it will have been remarked some weeks ago, when some of the officers and men of the *Knight Commander* were sent home by rail from Vladivostok, that the estimate of the through traffic they gave exceeded all previous calculations upon which trust could be placed. If this opinion was unskilled, it was at least unprejudiced and independent. No other information was vouchsafed until a few days ago, when the Paris correspondent of *The Times* quoted M. Marcel Hutin, of the *Echo de Paris*, as sending word from St. Petersburg that 1,700 men, with guns and ammunition, were passing Kharbin daily. On the whole, we are disposed to believe that this information is correct, and that it must represent a through traffic of twelve military trains a day.

We can some of us remember that Sir Percy Girouard, despite the train-wrecking capacities of our

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friends the Boers, contrived to place twelve trains a day at Bloemfontein over a single line in the summer of 1900. This was rendered possible by the existence of sidings at distances of six miles apart. The Russians began with stations twenty-five miles apart and very few sidings, and until Prince Khilkoff set to work the through traffic was very meagre. If twelve trains a day are now running, as seems probable, we must also believe that the sidings now are not more than twelve miles apart. Considering the length of the line, that would represent a remarkable effort, but it is safest to believe that it has been accomplished. The exact date upon which this transformation was completed on the weakest, or Trans-Baikal, section of the railway is still in doubt, but probably it was towards the end of July, conformably with our anticipation.

We have also to consider that the harvest throughout Manchuria has been exceptionally abundant and that Kuropatkin at Tieling has still a rich country at his back, even though he has lost the lower valley of the Liau and cannot rely on easy means of communication with Pechili. All these circumstances, except the last, combine to improve Russia's chances and to require a much greater effort on the part of Japan than has hitherto been necessary. If we were prepared to allow that six trains a day could, on an average and continuously, reinforce the army by 800 to 1,000 men a day, and maintain an army of 250,000 men efficient, we must naturally admit that double the number of trains can double the output of reinforcements, and supply double the previous effectives, though also at double the cost when they are all in the field.

It is also certain that, when once the *maximum* strength of the army has been reached and all the units are provided with transport, the subsequent despatch of drafts to maintain the corps and services at full strength should present no insuperable difficulties. Given that this improved situation was reached about the end of July, the full fruits cannot, of course, be gathered for

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some months to come, and in the interval Japan must make a corresponding effort, and must suit her strategy to the changing circumstances.

Our view, at the outbreak of war, was that Japan should confine herself to the destruction of the Pacific squadron, the occupation of Korea and Liautung, and the capture of Port Arthur and Vladivostok—a programme which we described as sufficiently ambitious for a first campaign. The crude strategy of Russia—whether inspired by Kuropatkin or others is of small moment—enabled Japan to win victory after victory in the field, and to gain the immense and additional advantage of moral superiority over her foe by a long sequence of unbroken successes. Kuropatkin, on the other hand, may say that his delaying actions have enabled him to retain the gate of entry into Southern Manchuria until the date when he hoped to be strong enough to attack. Whether the loss of material and moral strength is compensated for by this gain, it will be for the future to tell us. It is doubtful, however, whether the successful offensive is yet within his power, despite the successes of Khilkoff on the line of communications, successes which have certainly been remarkable, and even brilliant.

We can believe that what we may call the automatic reinforcement of the Japanese armies—namely, that ensured by the activity of home depôts—has been already carried out and the losses have been made good ; we must further assume that such strategic reserves as have been kept in hand will now be brought up for the next stroke. The present situation can only be temporary, since the armies are in touch along their front, and, if Kuropatkin intends to persevere in his Tolstoian attitude of offering his cheek to the smiter, it is only a question of the length of time required by the smiter to prepare his blow. The aim of Japanese strategy must now be to beat the Russians out of Mukden and Tieling, and then to await the Russian onset during the winter in a favourable position.

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Whether this object will be secured in this year's campaign or the next, no one will care to foretell.

If the feeling of personal superiority engendered in the Japanese ranks by constant victory is an immense gain, and the want of confidence of the Russians in themselves and their leaders a terrible disadvantage, the credit side of the balance of our ally is largely on the side of opinion. Opinion is much in war; against it mere numbers end by not counting at all. But we have not yet reached that stage; the Russian army is strong in numbers and occupies good positions; fresh troops have come up, and fresh courage has been instilled. To fight Russians, said Frederick, you must pound them with artillery and batter them like a fortress. For choice, no one would elect to fight Russians in a *champs clos*. To fight Russians, an army requires good, quick, lightly equipped infantry; mobile artillery, and plenty of it, and, for mounted men, either fast light cavalry armed with lance and rifle, or highly trained mounted infantry; better still, both combined. Given also a good staff and a sound staff system, thoroughly understood by general officers, it then only remains to ask for elbow room, and the ponderous Russian army, with its wretched staff, inconsequent movements, and incapacity for intelligent co-operation, stands but a poor chance against an enemy that can march and manœuvre. But, when we are in a region of mountain and river and have to attack fortified positions, with flanks secured and the trenches occupied by Russian infantry, then the outlook is less pleasing, and the moral is that an army fighting Russians must learn how best to apply its strength to their weakness, and to avoid the reverse situation. Close with a Frenchman and outmanœuvre a Russian, said Nelson, and the advice is as sound now as when it was given before Copenhagen.

It is not everything on one side that calls for criticism in this war, nor everything on the other that calls for praise. That is not true of any war, and it is not true

to-day, even though, as the allies of Japan, we are bound to exercise caution and reserve in remarks concerning the action of her forces.

A few thousand Boers under men like Christian de Wet, Daniel Theron, or Kritzinger, let loose in Manchuria and well mounted, would render the Russian position untenable, since the railway would be broken every night in several places. That part of our South African experiences, and the similar lessons of the American Civil War, Japan has not apparently absorbed, and as long as her mounted men are tied by the leg to army headquarters, so long will the record of their deeds in this war remain barren. Cavalry is not the arm in which the paltry spirit of prudence, preservation, and parsimony has any part at all. We can do with many sorts of cavalry, but no one has ever yet found a use for cavalry of position.

Meanwhile, after nearly eight months of preparation, the famous Baltic Fleet got under way on September 11 and steamed as far as Reval, where it once more cast anchor. Various dates in June, July, August, and September have been from time to time given out as those upon which the armada would certainly set out, and the latest of these is October 3, when, we are assured, Admiral Rozhdestvensky, after a positively last appearance at St. Petersburg, will put to sea.

The condition of the more important vessels of this squadron has been frequently discussed in *The Times* by competent writers, and from these and other accounts we were warranted in drawing the general conclusion that the junction of the Baltic and Pacific squadrons was a patriotic chimera, since it was evident that the state of unreadiness of the Baltic ships made it a reasonable certainty that the affair of the Pacific vessels would be settled before the reinforcements appeared as an organised squadron in the Far East.

Until the squadron leaves the Baltic it is not possible, neither is it necessary, to give a detailed description of the ships that have been assembled for

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this really colossal enterprise, but there are at present at Reval six battleships, five cruisers, and a number of transports and torpedo craft, making up in all a respectable force on paper, and awaiting the arrival of three more vessels from Kronstadt before setting out on its knight-errant's quest. The battleships are probably the *Imperator Alexander III.*, *Oslyabya*, *Navarin*, *Kniaz Suvaroff*, *Sissoi Veliky*, and *Borodino*, and to these the *Orel* will probably be added. Among the cruisers will be found the *Dmitri Donskoi*, *Aurora*, *Admiral Nakhimoff*, *Almaz*, and *Izumrud*, while it is possible that the *Smolensk* and the *Peterburg* may reach Libau in time to join the fleet after being regularly commissioned and purged of their past offences. There may be, and there probably are, many defects in some of these ships, but on paper the squadron is not unworthy of being matched with the navy of Japan, and the group of four battleships of the *Borodino* class of over 13,000 tons displacement are the most powerful ships that Russia possesses.

Should the squadron sail east, we must expect to see the ex-German cruisers and steamers, renamed the *Don*, *Ural*, *Terek*, *Kuban*, *Irtish*, *Anadyr*, and *Argun*, accompany or precede the armada. From the Black Sea there may come the *Jupiter*, *Mercury*, and *Meteor*, of the Steam Navigation Company, and possibly the *Tchitchakoff* and *Nikolai*, while of the Volunteer Fleet there are available the *Kieff*, *Vladimir*, *Yaroslav*, *Tamboff*, *Voronezh*, and *Saratoff*, together with the *Orel* at Toulon as hospital ship. This so-called auxiliary coaling squadron from the Black Sea will be supplemented by a cloud of colliers organised and distributed along the route by the German steamship companies which have undertaken the coaling of the fleet.

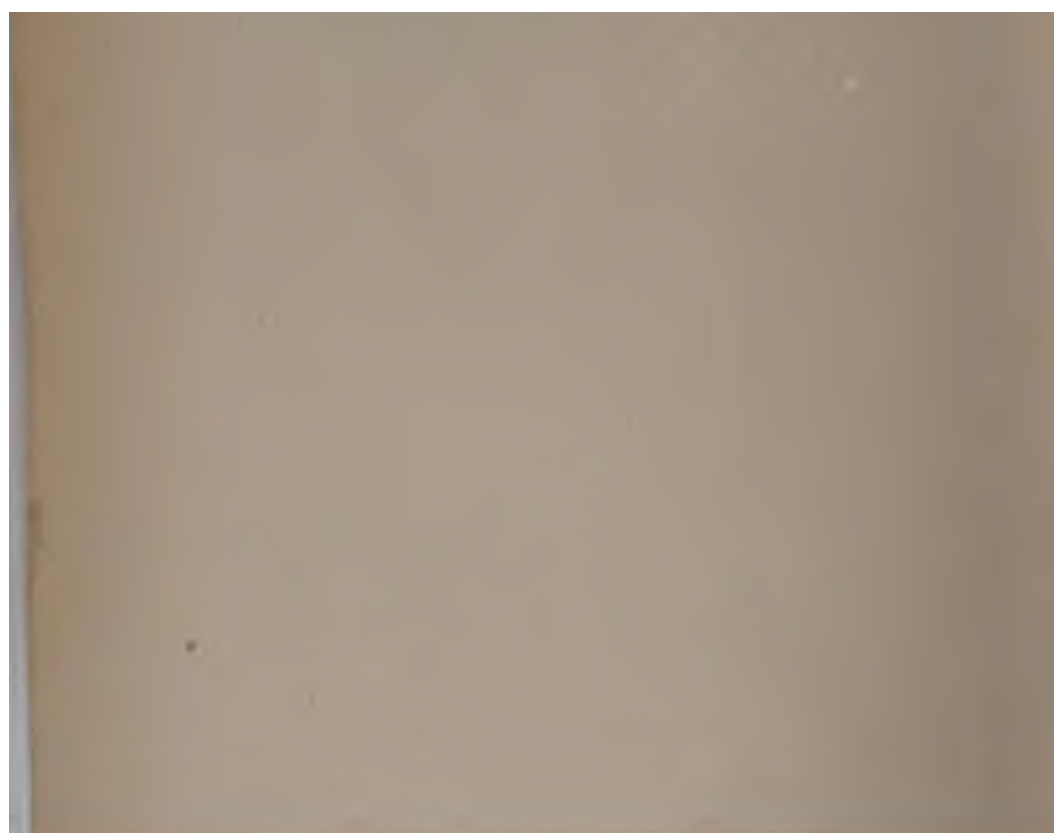
Considering that the armada cannot reach Japanese waters before Christmas ; that Port Arthur will not be available ; that Vladivostok will be frozen up ; and that Russia has not a single naval base on the route and cannot use British waters at all for the purpose of



ADMIRAL ROZHDESTVENSKY.



PRINCE KHILOFF.



coaling, the projected adventure is decidedly hazardous and does not seem to hold out a reasonable prospect of success. Materially speaking, the despatch of the squadron to the East is possible, although beset with great difficulty; the real trouble begins with the fighting, and increases whether victory or defeat ensue. At the same time, the plan is not devoid of elements of grandeur, and, should the squadron sail, its progress and its fate will be among the most remarkable and instructive episodes of modern naval history.

The nature of the Japanese proceedings at Port Arthur has from the first been dependent upon the sailing of the Baltic Fleet. Japan has been perfectly justified in covering all the events of the siege with a veil of mystery, since it was not in her interest that public attention should centre itself round Port Arthur, or that a great wave of popular excitement should compel Russia to send out all seaworthy ships at an earlier date. This might conceivably have been the case had the moving incidents of the siege been recounted day by day. Japan therefore proceeded with the attack methodically and silently, always with one eye upon the Baltic; and if she endeavoured to hasten proceedings by costly assaults, she soon found that permanent defences of the modern type, with Russians behind them, were not to be treated in such cavalier fashion. Finding also that the artillery fire of the forts remained unsubdued, she arranged, too late in the day, to bring up 11-in. guns, and it is these destructive weapons and the howitzers, combined with the artillery of the fleet, that began the more serious bombardment of the doomed fortress in the course of the past week. If Chifu rumour speaks true, the besiegers have made important headway; they are evidently proceeding with method and deliberation, and are eating into the defences bit by bit.

We are insufficiently informed to hazard any guess at the date of the fall of the place, but the general trend of the evidence is to the effect that the defence has

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steadily weakened and that the Japanese anticipate an early triumph. Most important of all, they believe that they can now make the ships in harbour choose finally between destruction and unsuccessful flight.

It is at this moment, after peacefully awaiting the consummation of the destruction of Fleet No. 1, that Fleet No. 2 weighs anchor, to proceed, in the most unfavourable season, to waters where it has no sanctuary, no possibility of repair, no resources, in order to measure itself with an almost uninjured and war-trained navy which can now afford to change its tactics and to throw itself upon its enemy in Nelson style, since it knows this Russian squadron to be the last.

The Tsar's autograph letter appointing General Gripenberg to the command of a Second Manchurian Army focusses the various rumours on this subject which have been current for some time past. "The intense energy," writes His Majesty, "with which Japan is conducting the war, and the stubbornness and high warlike qualities displayed by the Japanese, impel me to make considerable additions to the strength of my forces at the front in order to attain a decisive success within the shortest possible time. Since, in the accomplishment of this, the number of military units will reach such a figure that their continuance in one army is not admissible without prejudice to the proper direction, manœuvring, and mobility of the troops, I have found it necessary to divide the troops destined for active service in Manchuria into two armies. While leaving the command of one of these armies in the hands of General Kuropatkin, I appoint you to command the second. Your many years of service, your warlike exploits, and your wide experience in the warlike training of troops, give me full assurance that you, following the general directions of the Commander-in-Chief, will successfully lead to the attainment of the object of this war the army which is entrusted to you, and which will show its own valour and power of endurance in the fight against the foe for the honour

and dignity of the fatherland. God bless you for your great and glorious services to me and to Russia. I remain your affectionate NICHOLAS.”

It is certainly true that when the First Manchurian Army reaches its full strength it will be at least 250,000 strong, and that this figure, and the number of army corps which go to form it, cannot conveniently be exceeded for the reasons stated in the Imperial letter.

The only doubtful point is the identity of the Commander-in-Chief whose “general directions” General Gripenberg is told to follow. Presumably this Commander-in-Chief is the Viceroy, Admiral Alexeieff, who still retains the nominal title, although Kuropatkin commands the First Army of Manchuria. The point is not absolutely clear, but apparently an admiral, say at Kharbin, is to issue “general directions” to thirteen army corps operating in two wings, and to combine their movements upon the theatre of war. For a sailor the experience will be novel; for the armies themselves it promises to be exhilarating.

His Imperial Majesty speaks of the Japanese in kindly terms. He mentions the intense energy they display, their stubbornness and high warlike qualities, and in so doing honours both the enemy’s army and his own.

If we turn now to the operations of the main army, it is not easy to pick our way through the maze of rumour, since the Russian Headquarter Staff appears to be ignorant, not only of the Japanese proceedings, but also of the actions of its own army. General Sakharoff, a few days ago, assured us that “the Manchurian Army was nowhere engaged on September 16 and 17.” On the contrary, replies Marshal Oyama, we were attacked on the 17th by two columns of Russian troops, aggregating seven battalions and two batteries, and fighting went on for seven hours, the Russians being repulsed at nightfall. Thus Kuropatkin’s own Chief-of-Staff confesses his ignorance of attacks made by Russian troops within a few miles of his camp, and in these

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circumstances the amount of useful information we can reckon on from the Russian side is evidently limited.

If a serious attack is in progress at Port Arthur, it is not clear why Marshal Oyama should be in any hurry to advance. He knows that by the time he gets to Tieling all the 1st European and 6th Siberian Army Corps will have reached Kuropatkin, and that the 8th European Army Corps has not yet been reviewed by the Tsar prior to its departure from Odessa. He knows that this latter corps cannot be up until well on in November. On the other hand, when Port Arthur falls, the Japanese equivalent of two Russian army corps will be set free to join the main army at Liauyang. Meanwhile Marshal Oyama's business is to complete his line of railway and to provide rolling stock, to mass supplies at the front, replenish his ammunition, and embody in his regiments the drafts which have arrived to make good losses. He has nothing to lose by a few weeks' delay, and if Port Arthur falls he has something to gain. Even if it does not fall, the arrival of fresh troops from Japan will compensate for Kuropatkin's accession of strength since the last battle.

It is even possible that Oyama may send away a couple of divisions to take part in the attack on Port Arthur. He holds the central situation, and the thing is in his power. Kuropatkin is not likely to strike at him before the Hun has been crossed, and if the Russians resume the offensive and traverse the Hun in their turn to attack, nobody should be better pleased than the Japanese commander.

So long as the Japanese held the flank position they apparently considered themselves bound to exploit it before the slow-thinking Russians woke up to their danger and escaped. Oyama has no such strategic advantage now; consequently there is no reason for haste, and much reason for delay to organise the railway in his rear. We are, in fact, once more in the whispering gallery of the double objective, hearing on one hand that vast numbers of Japanese are marching on Mukden

by every available route, inspired by a proclamation of the Marshal suggesting that they should conquer or die, and listening on the other side to the news that a severe bombardment began at Port Arthur on the 19th, and that the Court at St. Petersburg is in great anxiety as to the result. On the whole we should be disposed to decide for Port Arthur as the immediate objective at this moment, and to draw the inference from the appearance of telegrams signed by Kuroki and from the Marshal's somewhat belated despatches that the latter is now present before Port Arthur. But Yamagata, like all good Samurai, fights with two swords, and we never know with which he will strike next. Moreover, neither he nor his disciples at the front are at all likely to tell us.

CHAPTER XXXII¹

RUSSIAN ARMIES AND THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE

SOME little time ago General Kuropatkin re-grouped his forces in several armies. There was the Army of Ussuri, under Linievitch, and the Army of the South, under Stössel. There was also the Army of the East, designed for the particular purpose of meeting Kuroki ; while, lastly, there was the main army, under Kuropatkin himself, including the rest of the field troops at his disposal. Then came the Tsar's rescript and the creation of the Second Manchurian Army, and the higher direction of the strategy of the campaign was once more in a state of flux.

Up to a certain point we can all follow and applaud the decision to raise and despatch a second army. Prince Khilkoff's really great work upon the railway has certainly doubled, and may even still further improve, the facilities of through traffic. It is therefore only natural that full advantage should be taken of the fact. It is also certain that, even without the 6th Siberian Corps, Kuropatkin's force consists of eight army corps and a strong force of cavalry, and that when these units are eventually brought up to their proper establishments and losses made good, they will have the capacity for incorporating from 250,000 to 300,000 men.

Further, it is certain that an army of this strength

¹ From *The Times* of October 3, 1904.

is as much as, if not more than, one man can effectively control and command. In the army of the Western type, composed of four army corps, the figure of 250,000 men is generally regarded as a *maximum*, and, as a rule, it would have several lines of rail leading from its zone of concentration to the army corps districts in the rear. The ideal of Western strategy is to have a through line of rail from each army corps district to the troops at the front, and this ideal has been almost, if not quite, achieved on certain Continental frontiers.

But Kuropatkin has only one single line for his eight army corps, and he has not the monopoly of that, since Vladivostok and Linievitch's troops require a certain proportion of the trains, while articles of primary necessity for the inhabitants of Russian East Asia have to be supplied. Moreover, the communications by road, except during the winter, are as bad as can be imagined, and the Russians have shown no capacity for movement in the hills. In every battle a large proportion of the troops within call has not been engaged, since the combination of indifferent staff, inferior roads, and inadequate mobility have rendered the Russian military machine cumbrous to a degree.

Therefore, the Tsar is abundantly justified in declaring in his rescript that a further increase of the units of the First Army is not admissible without prejudice to their direction, manœuvring, and mobility. He might, indeed, have gone further and have stated that they already exceed the useful *maximum* under the conditions that prevail.

General Gripenberg, that fine old soldier who has been *bombardé chef d'armée*, appears to have Kharbin assigned to him as a point of assembly. It is possible that the 6th Siberian Army Corps is still there and has not left for the south, since no certain news of its appearance at Tieling or Mukden has come through. The 8th Army Corps, which the Tsar has just reviewed at Odessa, will begin to entrain to-day, October 3, and with good luck may be assembled at Kharbin by the

third week in November, when Gripenberg should have some 70,000 men under his command. If two more army corps follow, as at present proposed, he should have nearly 150,000 men with him by the middle of January ; but it is doubtful whether the railway management will be able to devote such sustained effort to the forwarding of troops alone.

The question then arises as to the combination of the movements of these two armies, whether Gripenberg is set in motion at an earlier or a later date. The suggestion of the Imperial rescript is that they shall both follow the "general directions" of the Viceroy. So long as Gripenberg remains at Kharbin and Kuropatkin does the fighting at the front, no serious harm will ensue, save that arising from the necessary attrition in the supply and reinforcement of the First Army of Manchuria for the benefit of the Second. But when the Second Army takes the field it must do so either in juxtaposition with the first, or upon a separate and distinct mission. In the first case there will be two armies alongside of each other under rival and equal commanders, resulting in an impossible and absurd situation, which would probably rather be exaggerated than the reverse by the arrival of the Grand Duke Nicholas as *arbiter elegantiarum*. In the second case the two armies must act in unison, a unison secured by the intermediary of the Viceroy, whose starboard column of army corps will be under a leader who will view the admiral's signals with a marked degree of suspicion. The only satisfactory bond of union between the two armies would be the presence of the Tsar and the Imperial Headquarters in the field, since this authority, and this alone, would at once be accepted without question.

The advent of the Second Army of Manchuria has been heralded by a fanfare on the part of the Russian press. The official *Journal de St. Pétersbourg* bids Japan tremble and prepare for her latter end. It talks of the unshakable determination of Russia to press the

war to the end, scoffs at mediation, which no one has the remotest intention of offering, and says that "every one understands" it can only be dictated by the desire to save Japan from the disaster which is already felt to be inevitable. "The war," it continues, "is still only at its beginning, while Japan has already made her supreme efforts to put all her reserves in the field. It is presumed that Kuropatkin will not undertake any operation, however little risky, where a check might compromise the final success of our arms." Evidently, the inspirer of this article has not given much of his time to the study of logic, or he would not describe a Japanese disaster as inevitable, and then say that a check will compromise the final success of Russian arms. As to things that "every one understands," it is very regrettable that Leibnitz did not compose his *New Essays on the Human Understanding* in a government office at St. Petersburg, for there are evidently many things that have escaped his acute analysis.

The idea entertained in Russia that Japan has "put all her resources in the field" is one of those unfortunate beliefs that arise when governments allow themselves to be hypnotised by tables prepared by Intelligence branches without broad views. Paul Kruger's advisers were similarly beguiled by the reiterated statements which reached them that we could not place more than 70,000 men in the field; the real power of America is similarly and constantly misconceived by a study of her standing army. Japan has given the natural reply to these beliefs by a turn of the screw of her recruiting laws, affording ample margin, not only for meeting the danger threatened, but for largely surpassing all her probable requirements. What Russia has to consider is not the *ipse dixit* of a Grand Duke, a Sakharoff, or a Gilinsky, but the fact that she has to reckon with the entire able-bodied population of Japan. It may perhaps be news to the Russian War Office, but it is a fact, that no fewer

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than 700,000 voluntary offers of service were received by the Japanese military administration from men not called up for service. It would have been possible for her to have fought through this campaign with an army exclusively composed of volunteers, but she has very properly decided, when all were willing, to retain the system of service and the *lucidus ordo* that she had long prepared. Neither Japan nor Russia will make peace for lack of men.

It was not a very happy thought on the part of Russia to have boasted of her strength so soon, and to have given Japan ample time to increase her armies in corresponding or larger measure. Japan has not only a large reserve of arms, but her factories can turn out many hundred rifles daily, and her people are not impressed by the fulminations of St. Petersburg, but are confident in their capacity to outbid Russia at every point. They may be wrong, but hitherto, at all events, their judgment of the situation has proved, on the whole, correct.

Now if we turn to the state of public opinion in Russia, both at the front and at home, we can hardly believe that 700,000 Russians would volunteer for the war if they had the chance. The reports that reach us from all sides declare, in terms that cannot be misunderstood, that this war is the most unpopular that Russia has ever waged. It is not British or American correspondents alone who underline the fact, but critics friendly to Russia and men who desire her success. There is a public opinion in Russia, even at the front, and this opinion forms and fashions the public sentiment at home.

The Russian Red Cross Society is a body possessing large resources and great influence in high quarters. Up to July 15 it had sent 138 hospitals to the front, with 15,000 beds, 400 doctors, 1,750 attendants, and 800 sisters of mercy. Many of the best Russian families have sent one member or more to aid in this beneficent and charitable work; in addition, various officials on leave have spent some weeks at the seat of war.

The effect of the reverses and constant retreats upon the sentiments of this undisciplined body of opinion has been most damaging for Kuropatkin. In particular, the loss of Yingkow and the consequent closing of the last means of communication with the outside world, save over the Trans-Siberian, proved very disadvantageous. The Red Cross Society was no longer able to secure or provide all those delicacies which are luxuries to the healthy but necessities to the sick. The personal comforts and conveniences of various high-born people of both sexes of the Society itself were no longer to be satisfied. The hospitals were constantly on the move, and were inextricably mixed up with the tag-rag of a beaten army. The attendants listened painfully to all those bitter insinuations and malicious reports that are among the most disagreeable consequences of defeat. The post was open; and from all these harassed and dejected members of society there came back the expression and the echo of all these disappointed hopes, to be disseminated through all ranks of Russian society, together with similar complaints and accusations from officers, officials, and the rank and file of the army itself, or such part of it at least as was sufficiently educated to write.

It is not improbable that these echoes of the battlefields have done more to discredit the reputation of Kuropatkin among his own countrymen than all the defeats his army has suffered. "Every one with whom I have spoken is tired of this war." So telegraphs Colonel Gädke from the front, and he probably expresses in moderate terms the true sentiments of those who have borne the burden and heat of the day. In valour the armies may be equal; in enthusiasm for their cause they are certainly not.

It is not possible to judge of the cumulative effect of all these opinions upon the Russian public from the columns of the Russian press, since, despite the liberal tendencies of the new Minister of the Interior and the greater freedom of expression which journals have

allowed themselves since M. de Plehve's death, the hand of the censor is still heavy. But our contemporary the *Temps* has sent two representatives to Japan and Russia to study and report upon the state of public opinion in the two countries, and from these sources we have a series of letters of more than ephemeral interest. The correspondent in Russia has had many things to say during his residence in St. Petersburg which must cause a good deal of anxiety respecting the future relations of England and Russia, and appear to make it a pressing interest that those reforms which Lord Kitchener is projecting for the Indian Army should be put through with the least possible delay. But that is another and a larger question with which for the moment we are not concerned; and we need only recount the views expressed by this able chronicler when he reaches Moscow and has been able to study all shades of opinion in the national capital:—

“C'est à Moscou que j'ai commencé à entendre librement dire et répéter ce que la presse périodique n'ose pas rappeler trop haut, mais ce que, depuis une extrémité de l'empire jusqu'à l'autre, grands et petits, connus et inconnus, répètent sans gêne: ‘Maudite soit cette guerre sans raison et sans excuse; cette guerre dont les causes, bien qu'insuffisamment éclaircies, n'ont, ce semble, que peu de points communs avec l'intérêt bien compris du peuple russe; cette guerre qui nous coûte des millions et nous coûtera d'inutiles milliards quand elle sera terminée, qui fauche dans nos rangs des milliers de soldats, qui n'ajoute pas, il s'en faut, à notre prestige—et tout cela pourquoi? Pour nous assurer, sur un territoire étranger, la possession d'un port médiocre et sans profondeur!’ Ces réflexions, je les entends redire partout, sans relâche, par des gens de toute caste et de toute condition; j'ai donc quelques raisons d'admettre qu'elles représentent l'opinion dominante en Russie. . . . C'est un désir ardent d'en finir d'une façon ou de l'autre avec la malheureuse campagne et de recevoir des gages prouvant qu'à

l'avenir la possibilité de pareilles 'aventures' sera écartée pour jamais."

From Moscow the correspondent proceeded to Nijni Novgorod, and made inquiries among the commercial classes, with whose views he deals as follows, repeating the words of two representative Russian merchants:—

" Cette guerre nous ruine. Vous savez les difficultés avec lesquelles nous avons à lutter, nous autres industriels, et la nécessité on nous sommes de réduire soit notre personnel soit notre production. Mais ce que vous savez moins, peut-être, c'est la panique qui s'est abattue sur les banques et l'incroyable resserrement du crédit qui en est résulté. La crise est dure pour nous. Or, songez-y bien, les Japonais prendront Port Arthur. Je ne parle pas des millions qui y furent jetés à la mer ; mais, cette inutile forteresse, nous voudrions la reprendre. J'ignore si nous y réussirons ; en tout cas, c'est alors que commencera la crise sérieuse. La guerre va, de ce chef, s'éterniser, et une fois terminée, même à notre profit, elle continuera de nous coûter des sommes énormes. . . . Ce Port Arthur sera notre ruine."

If this is a correct reflection of the state of the public mind in Russia, it becomes of interest to turn to the other combatant and to inquire into the psychology of the war on the Japanese side in order to institute a comparison of the moral forces at work among a people who some continue to forget are our allies.

We must all desire to discover whether they are right who find a childish unreason in the Japanese character and assure us that their valour and energy are a mere passing mood, or whether, on the contrary, some among us have not yet penetrated the Japanese character or quite learnt to understand the high ideals which inspire Japanese conduct. But that study is a metaphysical problem of some complexity, and must be reserved for another chapter.

CHAPTER XXXIII ¹

THE SOUL OF A NATION

A NATION can neither anticipate nor attain to pre-eminence in the arts of war unless it possesses moral as well as material superiority over its enemy. Numbers, resources, territory, wealth, arms, even mere animal courage, are not enough to establish and maintain such pre-eminence unless there is also some deep and abiding moral principle of action which supports and sustains the frailty of human nature, inculcates high ideals, encourages emulation in noble deeds, and inspires both moderation in victory and constancy in defeat.

Patriotism, religion, and fanaticism have been in past ages the three great dominating forces which have determined the noblest deed of arms and the highest triumphs of the peaceful arts. In the domain of war, the first inspired Rome and Lacedæmon, the second had its highest realisation in the Crusades, while, for the last, we have all of us seen barbarians in distant lands confronting our bayonets with as much valour, though not with as much skill, as ever was displayed by the Tenth Legion or the knights who obeyed the clarion voice of Peter the Hermit. Who can recall without a thrill of admiration the morning of Omdurman, the great plain filled as far as the eye could reach with the countless hosts of the Khalifa, the regular movements of the ordered masses, the great standards of the fighting Emirs, the white-clad horsemen streaming

¹ *The Times*, October 4, 1904.

over Jebel Surgham with their snowy banners, the morning sun glinting upon their arms? Who can forget the shouts of the faithful that rent the air as the masses turned to rush down upon that little semi-circle of watching and wondering men who stood still as stone with ordered arms, inspired with no feeling but one of intense and delighted admiration? Who can wonder that they even forgot to open fire, fearful of marring such a stupendous spectacle, until a direct order from the stern-faced chief recalled them to a forgotten sense of what the Dervish warriors were purposing to attempt?

If our present soldiers have never themselves felt the furious inspiration of religious war, they know, at least, to what prodigies of valour fanaticism can impel the lowest of mankind, and in three long years of war they have learnt something, too, of the sacrifices and the efforts that a stern and a stiff-necked people can offer up on the altar of patriotism. They have, in all good conscience, the grounding necessary for an inquiry into the inspirations of *bushido* in Japan. There have been other, many other, motives which have inspired noble deeds, among which the unwritten code of knightly honour of chivalry occupies a very distinguished place. But chivalry never went deep down into the masses, and no movement that is restricted to a small, if select, circle can ever hope to count for much in the play and counterplay of national rivalries and the history of the world.

Of all the many remarkable circumstances of this Far Eastern war, the fact that dominates everything else is the courage and conduct of the Mikado's armies. We recognise, almost grudgingly and in spite of ourselves, the existence of a moral force that appears able to govern and sway the whole conduct of a whole people, inspiring not a caste, but a nation from highest to lowest, to deeds that are worthy to rank with the most famous of history or of legend. We want to know what this force is, whence it comes, and what it

means ; the sense of its existence makes us jealous, uncomfortable, almost annoyed. We are told that the Japanese are scientific fanatics ; in effect that is apparently the result ; but effects are nothing, and causes everything. What we desire to know is the cause, the underlying motive that inspires the deeds of valour, too numerous to name, that are told us from all sides, without a single dissentient voice, both from one side of the battlefield and from the other, even finding a generous acknowledgment in a rescript of the Tsar's.

The Western world listened impatiently before the war to the tittle-tattle of a few travelled dreamers, who spoke of new forces and new ideals—new, that is, to us. But we all doubted until we saw the new forces at work, and then contented ourselves with the mere registration of ascertained facts, till we had in our possession a volume of evidence from which conclusions might be drawn and legitimate deductions made. We watched the dignified conduct of the negotiations, the calm decision of the Japanese Empire to make war ; we saw the deeds of Togo's men off Port Arthur ; we read of the devotion of the warriors who sailed their ships to certain death in that fatal channel ; we noted the spirit of Commander Hirose, of Captain Sakurai, and of many other named and unnamed heroes on land and sea, at the Yalu, at Nanshan, round the Motienling, and at Liauyang ; we observed the patient constancy of the people of Japan, and never a single discordant note broke the harmony of the strangely fascinating epic. We saw that the Japanese were fighting with the firm determination to conquer or die ; that defenceless men in unarmed ships preferred death to surrender, not in theory, but in deed and in truth ; that men and officers were possessed with an unconquerable spirit, and so remained unconquered ; and that from highest to lowest and in all categories of the armed forces the story was one and the same. That set us all a-thinking, for it was evident, as Captain Brinkley truly says, that “ better men in battle have not been educated by any creed.”

Valour is nothing new to the West, since the annals of all armies are crowded with it. It was not that; there was something more behind, something which, had all Western armies possessed it, would have prevented black marks which besmirch the military escutcheons of all nations of the West without a single exception. What was it? What is it?

It is hardly possible for any one who turns over the fascinating leaves of Captain Brinkley's truly marvellous work upon Japan not to say to himself at every page, "Russia ought to have known, aye, and all Europe too." The art of a nation is the expression of its soul. What Japanophile collectors should have boasted when they added a fresh gem to their collection—a carving by Hidari Jingoro, a masterpiece of lacquer by Korin, a painting by Sesshu, or a Buddha by Unkei—was not their gratified vanity, but the discovery of a new force in the family of nations. The genius, the application, the ingenuity, the infinite variety, the imagination, and the finish of Japanese craftsmen should have told us long ago that the nation had but to apply these talents to national uses in a wider sense, to rise in a moment to a level with the best.

At first sight, indeed, there appears to be something amiss. History shows that great and lasting national pre-eminence, whether military or political, carries with it every other form of greatness. We take the great masterpieces of Greek and Roman art as a matter of course; we expect to find a Titian produced by Venice when she ruled the Adriatic, a Velasquez by Spain when she dominated half the world, a Rembrandt by Holland when she had shaken off the Spanish yoke, a Reynolds by England to recall the great figures of the fighting aristocracy that triumphed over a world in arms.

If national pre-eminence in Japan has apparently, and, we may almost say, inadvertently, lagged far behind the days when Japanese art attained to its zenith, it is more appearance than reality, since the

spirit that runs like a silver thread through Japanese history is quite unbroken, and *bushido* itself, the soul of the nation, is a direct product of very ancient times, so ancient, indeed, that no one can trace its original beginnings. The subject is not one to be touched upon lightly or without a preliminary warning that no one is really competent to discuss *bushido* save a *bushi*, and that the perfect *bushi* has never existed, since perfection is not for man to achieve, no, not even in Japan. The writings of native philosophers upon this subject are not all that can be desired, since, for the most part, the authors who have endeavoured to epitomise or codify *bushido* are themselves not *bushis*, and are consequently unable to unfold the whole gospel of this remarkable code of ethics. *Bushido*, which may be very inadequately translated as the way of the knights, is the unwritten code of moral and ethical principles which fashions the conduct of all its adherents and makes up the scheme of life of the *bushi* or *samurai*. It is a Japanese proverb that says, "As the cherry blossom is among flowers, so is the *bushi* among men."

If we cannot adequately express all that *bushido* is, we can say what it is not. Take the average scheme of life of the average society of the West, and *bushido*, as nearly as may be, represents its exact antithesis. *Bushido* offers us the ideal of poverty instead of wealth, humility in place of ostentation, reserve instead of *réclame*, self-sacrifice in place of selfishness, the care of the interest of the state rather than that of the individual. *Bushido* inspires ardent courage and the refusal to turn the back upon the enemy; it looks death calmly in the face, and prefers it to ignominy of any kind. It preaches submission to authority and the sacrifice of all private interests, whether of self or of family, to the common weal. It requires its disciples to submit to a strict physical and mental discipline, develops a martial spirit, and, by lauding the virtues of courage, constancy, fortitude, faithfulness, daring, and self-restraint, offers an exalted code of moral principles.

not only for the man and the warrior, but for men and women in times both of peace and of war.

The origin of *bushido* is lost in the mists of antiquity. To the ancients it was often the sole form of religion, but it has drawn inspiration in later centuries from many faiths. The patriotism of indigenous Shintoism, the stoical philosophy of the Zen sect of Buddhism, the asceticism of Brahminism, and the self-abnegation of Christianity have one and all become embodied, or are gradually becoming embodied, in the unwritten code of ethics of which *bushido* consists. There is no dogma, no infallibility, no priesthood, and no ritual; *bushido* takes the very best and the very highest of all ancient and modern philosophy and morals and endeavours to embody it in an ordered scheme of life.

The term *bushi*, closely represented by the ideal of the faithful knight of chivalry, can be traced back for 1,500 years in the history of Japan. *Bushido* is not a religion, but a philosophy. It does not centre so much upon personal loyalty to the Emperor as upon loyalty, for its own sake, to all superiors, and to the Imperial Heaven-descended House most of all, as the highest embodiment of the principle of authority. If an Emperor were unworthy, another member of the Imperial House would take his place; there would be no civil war, for idolatry of the War-Lord is not among the tenets of a philosophy in which the individual, for his own sake, scarcely counts.

This sinking of all individual advantage save posthumous honour in the general fund of the common good leads to the strange neglect, as it seems to us, of honour due to certain leaders, armies, divisions, regiments, and ships in the present war. A certain detachment goes to a certain place, fighting takes place, many thousand men perish on both sides, the enemy is defeated, and the war continues. But seldom, indeed, is a word uttered of praise for living men, or of glory for ships or corps; the honour of fighting for the general good is enough. The legends of Sparta offer

very exact precedents of authentic stories told of the fortitude shown by *bushis* who have approached most nearly to their ideal. When Gongoro, in pursuit of the enemy, was struck by an arrow in the eye, he continued the chase with the shaft embedded in his head. At the close of the battle he submitted to the removal of the arrow, but it was so firmly fixed that the friend who removed it had to lay Gongoro on his back and place a foot upon his head to gain the necessary leverage. When the arrow was removed, Gongoro sprang up and challenged his friend to mortal combat for the indignity implied by the manner in which the shaft had been removed. In this philosophy cowardice is the greatest of all crimes, and beggars in the streets make songs at the expense of any man who survives disgrace, even though such disgrace is only capture in fair fight. From this comes *seppuku* or *harakiri*, the final act of self-immolation, which the *bushi* or *samurai* is always ready to commit, whenever his honour or that of his master is discredited in any way.

But it would be the greatest of errors to suppose that *bushido* calls upon the faithful for a mere stupid sacrifice of life. Nothing could be further from the truth. The true ideal of the *bushi* was admirably expressed by Commander Yuasa, when speaking to his men before steaming into Port Arthur :—

“ Let every man set aside all thought of making a name for himself, but let us all work together for the attainment of our object. It is a mistaken idea of valour to court death needlessly. Death is not our object, but success, and we die in vain if we do not attain success. If I die, Lieutenant Yamamoto will take the command, and if he is killed you will take your orders from the chief warrant officer. Let us keep at it till the last man, until we have carried out our mission.”

Can anything finer be found in the history of war ?

Bushido requires its disciples to live with Spartan

simplicity and to avoid every kind of ostentation. Content, it thinks, is natural wealth, and luxury artificial poverty. Such simplicity is almost universal in Japan, and it allows a reverse of fortune to be met with greater dignity by the Japanese than by a nation or individuals to whom the term "ruined" implies a mere monetary deficit and a loss of material luxury.

The philosophic and semi-stoical basis of *bushido* has not improbably been the cause of certain misunderstandings between Japanese leaders and some Anglo-Saxons at the front. We can imagine a stoic to be many things, but we can never picture him as a man of the world, even in the best sense of the term, or as a hail-fellow-well-met, the "good chap" of current slang. A *bushi* is necessarily the exact reverse of these things, believing them all to have a substratum of hypocrisy and deceit. He is reserved, austere, polite, but distant, thinking that the display of natural dignity best honours himself and those with whom he is brought in contact. *Bushido* may therefore be said to embody the ideals of knightly chivalry and of Spartan simplicity, and, further, to draw much from philosophy and the purely moral side of the greatest of religions. Loyalty, courage, honesty, simplicity, temperance, chastity, and charity are one and all cultivated by whomsoever would become a *bushi*. When we sign a treaty of alliance with a nation inspired by such lofty ideals, we know that its terms will be kept to the last breath of the ultimate rag-picker.

Thirty-seven years ago Japan was a military empire, and the ruling class was that of the *samurai*. If they consented to the loss of many cherished rights when the modern revival of the nation began, and their consent was in itself a splendid practical illustration of *bushido*, they surrendered nothing of their tenets, and, while remaining essentially a warrior caste, spread abroad among all ranks of the people the code of ethics which had won for them their distinguished position in the past. Some privileges they lost, but they took a

noble revenge, and set about to level up the nation to their standard instead of themselves falling below it.

The principles of *bushido* have always had an intellectual and literary basis; the claims of learning have been held in as great reverence by the *samurai* as feats of arms. That is a very important point to remember, since it explains, as nothing else can, the receptivity of modern Japan, prepared by long years of intellectual activity to recognise good and evil, to adopt one and reject the other. The superficial world of the West called the Japanese imitative. That was simply untrue, and has done more than anything else to spread abroad false ideas of the national genius. It was natural that, when the *samurai* became officers of a modernised army and navy, they should seek to incorporate fresh recruits in their ranks from the new sources opened by universal service for the career of arms. If *bushido* is intellectually aristocratic, it is politically and socially rather the reverse. Any one can become a *bushi* by conduct in peace and by valour in war; merit alone recruits and maintains its ranks. It is open to the highest and the lowest in the land to excel, since neither birth nor wealth is required, only personal worth and conduct.

The government, at the time of the Restoration, experienced the need for a moral basis for its system of education, and found in *bushido* and the tenets of the *samurai* a code applicable to all classes of the people. None of the existing creeds was likely to appeal to the masses, since allegiance was divided between them, and a national religion hardly existed. A moral code based on one or the other would have provoked and encouraged disunion; *bushido*, on the contrary, was a code peculiarly suited to promote union of thought, and to serve as a system of state ethics which would supply the moral side at least of a religious education. When this decision was taken, the priesthood of the various Eastern faiths was not held in great or general esteem. It was ignorant of science and philosophy, and did not shine either in conduct or intelligence. The *samurai*

filled the void, and *bushido* offered itself as an admirable moral training, interfering in no way with any established religions, from many of which, indeed, it had drawn some of the finest of its inspirations. Thus the *samurai* became not only the martial leaders of the people, but also its instructors in the ethics they had long preferred. Vain, indeed, would have been the material rise of Japan to power without the fortifying strength of this ancient and compendious philosophy.

The *bushi* himself is formed among old families of *samurai* almost from the cradle, by his mother as well as by his father, since the share taken by the women of Japan in the conservation of the ancient tenets of *bushido* has been greatly under-estimated. Their honesty, their aptitudes, and their character have been almost universally misconceived.

In the schools *bushido* is now regularly taught, while all branches of the armed forces, including cadet corps, may almost be considered the high schools of its learning. When a number of officers of any standing or rank are gathered together, it is nine chances in ten that the doctrine of *bushido* is the subject of conversation, since the precepts and practices of this philosophy exercise a passionate attraction upon those who study and endeavour to live in them.

When the modern revival began in Japan, and men began to wander over the world in pursuit of science, it was feared that *bushido* would lose its influence and that materialism would dominate, owing to the multiplicity of things that had to be learnt. So firmly, however, was it embedded in the history of the people, and so energetic were those who held aloft its banners, that it has not been overborne, but has rather prospered with every material advance of the country. It has, in the present war, expressed its full significance and attained to the maturity of its fame. Ill-starred, indeed, was Russia to have chosen a moment when upon the material foundation of modern science was superimposed the moral structure of an older age!

The corps of officers in particular acts as a great rallying centre for this school of philosophy, and is always on the watch to promote and extend philosophic and literary culture. Thus, even such apparently trivial questions as to whether dancing and music should be permitted for young officers aroused anxious debates. It was decided that dancing was to be deprecated, and that only certain branches and forms of music of a martial and encouraging character should be permitted. A Bayreuth festival would be considered a debauch and Wagnerism generally a disease. All mournful, depressing, or debilitating strains were absolutely banned.

Bushido provides a moral basis for education of a sufficiently broad character to adopt and incorporate all the greatest teachings of Christianity, while avoiding the internecine strife of sects and factions which would be likely to follow the acceptance of it as a state religion. The ideal of *bushido* is high. As a system of national ethics it is politically admirable, since it promotes discipline and union, sinks the individual in the state, and affords no room, or no apparent room, for sectarianism or dissent. It has no forms and no ritual, and is broad-based on vital forces and eternal truths.

We are not, indeed, asked to believe that forty-six millions of people practise the principles of *bushido* in all their full significance. If Japan could attain to such an ideal, she would conquer not only Russia, but the world. Better far would it be for Japan that she should lose her material attributes of power than this wonderful moral force that creates, sustains, and renews it. The Japanese feel, in the words of one of their writers, that "we have been raised by Providence to do a work in the world, and that work we must do humbly and faithfully as opportunity comes to us. Our work, we take it, is this: to battle for the right and uphold the good, and to help to make the world fair and clean, so that none may ever have cause to regret that Japan

has at last taken her rightful place among the nations of the world."

Whatever views we may entertain as to *bushido*, there can be no possible doubt that its teachings supply the moral forces which we see to-day in action. They explain much, and help us to understand the spirit with which the war is waged by Japan.

How far they will maintain their hold upon the people in the flood-tide of victory, or under the ebb of defeat, it will be for the future to tell us. But it is certain that, if the masses of the people prove themselves worthy of these high ideals during a long and wearing struggle, they will raise *bushido* to a height that will astonish even themselves, and make its doctrines worthy not merely of this passing notice in an English journal, but of searching inquiry and consideration by the best brains of our Western intellectuals.

CHAPTER XXXIV¹
THE BATTLE OF THE SHAHO,
OCTOBER 9—17

The Times, October 8.

THERE are some reports which cannot be lightly passed by to the effect that Kuropatkin is meditating the offensive. It is apparently believed that the Russians now have a considerable numerical preponderance, and, if Stössel's situation is less rosy than his despatches make out, Kuropatkin will be aware of the fact and may indeed have been asked to make one more effort.

If, as seems possible, Kuropatkin may yet receive the command of the two armies of Manchuria if he can score a victory, knowledge of the fact would not incline him to inaction, while the feeling in the army itself is not a matter to which he can close his eyes. At a recent banquet at Mukden, following a presentation of colours to certain regiments, General Baron Stackelberg drank to the health of General Kuropatkin, who was present, and coupled with it a toast "to the march on Liauyang." This story comes from M. Recouly, who was at the banquet, and it may therefore be taken as authentic. The matter is, perhaps, of no great importance in itself, but it shows that there are influences at work which may bring about a change of plan at any moment. We may also note that the indefatigable Gädke is leaving Mukden for the south

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of October 8, 11, 15, 18, and 20, 1904.

and that the correspondent of the *Lokalanzeiger* is similarly inspired and talks of "imminent operations." Lastly, M. Recouly also left Mukden for the south on Wednesday evening last. He talks of the extraordinary animation that reigns at Mukden, declares that the railway trains are all crammed, and that the movement of the Russian masses presents a most imposing spectacle.

These warnings, and the fact that Kuropatkin and all his staff attended an open-air service on Wednesday morning, are all storm-portents which no intelligence department would ignore. If we hesitate to trust them implicitly owing to the fact that the censor has let them pass, it is also credible that the Russians may not think there is the least chance of concealing a movement of this importance from the Japanese.

There is no doubt that the Russian army, like its enemy, has been strongly reinforced. Moreover the units coming in from the west are now up to their full war establishments, while the supply of drafts to make good losses appears to be working well.

Excluding the troops which fall to Generals Gripenberg and Linievitch, the First Manchurian Army will in future consist of one Siberian Army Corps, three East Siberian, and three Western Corps, or seven army corps of 14 divisions, making up a grand total of 250,000 men and 800 guns when all the ranks are filled up. This will not have been the case as yet, since the transport of the 6th Siberian Corps of the Second Army has occupied the railway; but in view of the great improvements effected in the through traffic it would not be safe to reckon Kuropatkin's force at less than 220,000 men at this moment, and if the 6th Corps is available for the impending operations the figure may be 260,000.

Considering the superior quality and leading of the Japanese, the passage of the Hun and the attack upon the three Japanese armies in their fortified position are enterprises that promise success. The Russian

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army has twice taken the offensive—at the Motienling and on September 2. In each case it has failed against inferior forces, and there is no evidence why, under present circumstances, a third attempt should meet with any better fortune. At the same time, the advantages accruing to the offensive are so very considerable when they are skilfully used that a Russian advance will have certain points in its favour, and the credit of the Tsar's armies will be largely retrieved if they can gain some measure of success in their bold and dangerous attempt. Whether the idea is to throw the weight of the attack upon the Japanese right, left, or centre, there is at present nothing to show, but we may notice that a Japanese reconnaissance found the enemy five miles to the north of Penhsihu, and that the Russians displayed a determination to hold their ground. Up to a certain point the position is that of the late battle of Liauyang with the *rôles* reversed, and if the Russians take their courage in both hands and come on, no one should be better pleased than Marshal Oyama.

The Times, October 11.

GENERAL KUROPATKIN's order, dated Mukden, October 2, confirms the rumours of a Russian advance to which we alluded last week. It is, indeed, next to impossible that this offensive should not now be undertaken after the issue of an order distinctly stating that the moment for the attack, ardently desired by the army, had at last arrived, and that the Japanese are to be compelled to do Russia's will, a task for which they have hitherto displayed so little aptitude. The order is addressed directly to the army of Manchuria, and indirectly to the Russian people, and to the world at large. Its purpose is to restore confidence and promote enthusiasm, and for that purpose it is well conceived.

We need not quarrel with the pleasing retrospect of the war with which the general presents us. The art of addressing troops, in which Napoleon was such a

past-master, defies analysis and criticism. We do not look for history in a *Bulletin de la Grande Armée*; we look for the sacred fire of leadership, the inspiration and imagination which prompts or recounts great deeds. Who can forget that trumpet-call of 1815?—"Pour tout français qui a du cœur le moment est venu pour vaincre ou mourir!" Who, even to-day, can look in the eyes of a French regiment, even at the close of the longest day, without seeing the spark that only requires the divine gift of leadership to stir into consuming flame? If any one desires to know why Napoleon laid Continental Europe at his feet, he has but to go to France, in any September that suits him, and if he does not read the secret of the Napoleonic epic, then it need only be said that he is greatly to be pitied.

The proclamations of great generals to their armies—to those about to die—have something almost sacred about them. We raise our hats, make no comment, and pass on. To each army its own note. One can swallow grandiloquence at which a second would scoff; a third may be inspired by revenge, a fourth by duty. There is something to be said even for the English general who asked his men if they meant to be beaten by a lot of orange-sucking Spaniards. It is all a matter of taste and nationality.

But there is one feature in the policy announced that will cause a rare *tapage* among the shades of the great warriors in Olympus. Kuropatkin adopts the words of Dragomiroff, and says to the Japanese, "Take care, enemy, I am marching on you!" That is very honourable, even magnificent, but it is not war, and Napoleonic war least of all. The order is dated October 2, and, if it reached the Japanese, they should be fully prepared. If rumour pointed that way before, there is all the difference in the world between conjecture and certainty, and armies who are beaten after a week's warning of the enemy's attack richly deserve all the misfortunes that befall them.

It is not the Napoleonic conception. "Faites

défense," writes Napoleon to Fouché during the march to the Rhine, "faites défense aux gazettes des bords du Rhin de parler de l'armée, pas plus que si elle n'existait pas." To his last days Napoleon knew how to hurl his concentrated forces into the very midst of the hostile cantonments and to surprise the enemy by his onset. The concentration of the French army in 1815 is an unsurpassable model of one of the fine arts of war.

We have already given the various reasons calculated to cause a Russian offensive movement at this juncture—the question of the personal equation involved in the command, the undertaking to attack when the Russian army reached a certain strength, and finally the plight of Port Arthur and the never-ceasing attraction of that always fatal magnet. We can read all these things in Kuropatkin's order, but perhaps we have not yet stated the Port Arthur attraction strongly enough. "Bear in mind," says the General, "the importance of victory to Russia, and, above all, remember how necessary victory is the more speedily to relieve our brothers at Port Arthur." Above all, the relief of Port Arthur! How well some of us remember that cry before Ladysmith, and what it cost us to get through!

It is clear that the decision to advance was taken towards the end of September, and it is necessary to glance back and recall a few incidents that have occurred. There is no doubt that General Stössel's despatches upon the fighting round Port Arthur between September 19 and 23 reached St. Petersburg a few days later, and that the second part of his report, bringing the story up to September 30, was in the hands of the Tsar soon afterwards. It is difficult to believe that the plight of Port Arthur does not stand out as the *teterrima causa* of the decision taken by Kuropatkin to advance. We have his word for it, and we are bound to believe him. Moreover, an emissary of the Viceroy's—namely, Captain Klado, reached the Russian capital during the third week in September, and following immediately

upon these events we had to record the formation of a second Manchurian army and the publication of the Tsar's rescript.

The chances are that Port Arthur is in worse case than its gallant commander admits, and that, in view of the reinforcements he has lately received, General Kuropatkin has been either ordered or permitted to stake a *maximum* upon the gaming-table of war.

We have nothing from Marshal Oyama of later date than October 4, and there is not much to be gathered from the record of Russian reconnaissances on that day, save that the enemy's post at Changtan, on the right bank of the Hun, had apparently withdrawn. If the Manchurian army were thoroughly mobile in all its parts, there would be many alternatives open to the Russian general. But, until proof is given to the contrary, and in view of the large numbers employed, we are almost bound to believe that the railway must remain the axis of the march to the south. In this case the Russian masses will be found within a day's march or two on each side of the line, and the main weight of the attack will not readily be diverted to a great distance from the railway owing to difficulties connected with supply.¹

No one has yet told us where the Japanese mean to stand, and in default of detailed maps of the country we have no certain guide to the positions they are likely to have chosen. All we know is that the Japanese centre is somewhere on the line of the Yentai branch railway, and, as the Russians halted here after their defeat at Liauyang, the presumption is that there is some kind of position suitable for defence. Whether Oyama holds this ground as his main position, however, or whether he merely occupies it with an advanced guard, there is nothing to show. The Yentai mines are certainly important, and if the plant and workings

¹ "During the battle the commissariat arrangements broke down, and for two days the 1st Siberian Corps had no rations issued to them."—Lord Brooke, *An Eye-Witness in Manchuria*, p. 223.

were not damaged by the Russians in their retreat it would be an object of the Japanese to hold them. But they are not likely to repeat our mistake in North-Eastern Natal, or to allow their general strategy to be dictated by such secondary considerations as the position of coal mines. They appear to have bridged all the rivers and repaired the roads within the zone of immediate operations; they are fresh and fit, and we have word of a fourth army which appears to have escaped the ken of the arithmeticians at Mukden. All we can yet be sure of is that if the Russian masses come on and deliver a headlong attack *à la* Suvaroff upon an intrenched position with three or four Japanese armies holding it, we shall soon hear of one of the bloodiest fights recorded in the annals of modern war.

The Times, October 15.

ONE of the bloodiest fights recorded in the annals of modern war has been fought out during the past week in Manchuria, and all the available evidence points to the failure of the Russian attack. We have already given some of the reasons that appear to have inspired General Kuropatkin's decision to assume the offensive. Upon these points we can be well content to await the further explanations which will no doubt follow the closing scenes of the great conflict.

But given the decision to attack, what was the Russian view of the military situation that brought about the particular tactics of the movements of the last six days? We have it from a great many sources that a curiously low estimate of the Japanese army was made by the Russians at Mukden early in the month. Detailed estimates have, indeed, been published which purported to account for every unit under Marshal Oyama, and allowed him 130,000 men less than the Russians were alleged to possess. Moreover, it was said that the Japanese troops were downcast and exhausted. "On prétend," says a French correspondent

in close touch with the St. Petersburg War Office, "on prétend qu'elles présentent des indices de réel épuisement." From the army at the front there also came word of Japanese prisoners clothed in rags and famishing. Both materially and morally the Japanese army was thus apparently rated low by its enemy, who displayed his customary capacity for crediting nothing save things that he wished to believe. The spreading of false information in the enemy's camp is one of the many fine arts of war. It is generally greatly neglected owing to want of imagination, but it is all the same a potent means of military action, and one that deserves more attention than it receives.

There can be no doubt that the information of the Japanese has been as consistently good, early, and accurate as that of the Russians has been the reverse. Nor were there any signs that the very simple reasons for the Japanese inaction after Liauyang were ever properly understood at Kuropatkin's headquarters. It was put down to exhaustion, to surprise at the numbers and valour of the Russian troops, and to dread of resuming the offensive against such a mighty antagonist. The construction of defences by the Japanese to the north of the Taitse was taken as additional evidence of weakness. A German professor of the art of war, with his usual acumen, assured the world that the Japanese impetus was at an end, while in the friendly and allied nation of France those many genial spirits who have stuck to their friends in a fashion that speaks more for their hearts than their heads informed their readers that the terrible Russian will was now coming into play, and that the Japanese had nothing to do but to bend their heads and submit to the inevitable. This entrancing panorama of a state of things that did not exist seems to have exercised an unfortunate influence upon the Russian command and to have strengthened the generally false views which appear to have prevailed at Mukden. M. Marcel Hutin, of the *Echo de Paris*, whose information has been generally correct. quoted

textually a telegram from Kuropatkin in a message despatched from St. Petersburg on October 10. This telegram reads as follows: "My intention is to advance slowly, so as to go surely. I shall fortify intermediate positions. The main body of Kuroki's army appears to be falling back upon Liauyang, where a battle will probably soon take place. Yentai, although fortified, will doubtless not resist for long." If we may take this telegram as authentic, it conveys the impression that the Russian commander anticipated a defensive attitude on the part of his enemy, and that all his plans were laid with this preconceived idea in his mind.

Far from being either exhausted or reduced in numbers or wanting in confidence, the Japanese army was itself on the eve of resuming its advance when Kuropatkin crossed the Hun. Had the Russians waited but a few days longer they would have found no need for a march to the south. Far from being committed to a defensive attitude or to passive resistance behind works of fortification, the Japanese were straining at the leash and were just as eager to assail their enemy as he was to attack them. For the resulting situation Kuropatkin was wholly unprepared. His plan of action, so far as we can judge of it by the reports from the battlefield, appears to have aimed at a concentric movement upon Liauyang from north and east. He seems to have allotted seven divisions to the attack from the north and six to that from the east, retaining in his own hands a general reserve which in all probability did not exceed three divisions, since it is not likely that he has more than sixteen all told. His hope, if French correspondents are to be believed, was to surround and besiege the Japanese at Liauyang, and then, when they were securely shut up, to send a strong force off to the south to stretch out a hand to the defenders of Port Arthur. The fact that the Viceroy placed his *visé* on this plan and that Gilinsky graced the field with his approving presence does not appear to have inspired Kuropatkin with any qualms.

The Japanese occupied a semicircular position from Yentai to Penhsihu on the Taitse facing north and east. It was, so far as modern warfare goes, and in view of the large numbers at disposal, a fairly concentrated position, and the army reserves south of the Yentai mines were within an easy march of any part of the line. It was what the French very aptly call a *position d'attente*. Immediately the design of the Russian commander was observed on Sunday, October 9, Marshal Oyama decided to attack, thinking that he might be able to do so before all the Russian columns were south of the Hun. He was determined, in any case, to seek out the enemy's masses and assail them with the utmost vigour wherever they might be found. It was a bold decision and it was highly inconvenient for Kuropatkin.

The first initiative, however, was with the Russians, and brought them a preliminary measure of success. In two fierce attacks their left, consisting of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Siberian Corps, under General Baron Stackelberg, with Rennenkampf's and Samsonoff's cavalry divisions, carried positions near Penhsihu and in the vicinity of the Ta Pass immediately to the north of that hamlet. Bodies of Cossacks and infantry also crossed the Taitse, and momentarily interrupted the communications between the Japanese garrison of Penhsihu and Hsihoyen. It was indispensable for the success of the Russian operations that the Taling and Penhsihu should fall, so that the bulk of the left column should be able to utilise and descend the Taitse Valley towards Liauyang to co-operate with the main attack from the north. But Kuroki's well-tried troops held firm in their main position at these most important points, and on the arrival of reinforcements on the 10th recaptured the ground they had lost. A flying column despatched south of the river also drove away the Russians who had crossed, and then rejoined the army. This failure at Penhsihu wrecked Kuropatkin's scheme, prevented the anticipated co-operation of the two

Russian attacks, and by securing Oyama's threatened flank allowed him to pursue his offensive plans, with the main body of his armies on his centre and left in relative security, and with the knowledge that Kuroki was holding off three Russian army corps from the decisive quarter of the field.

Throughout the whole of the 10th and 11th the battle raged along the general front. The apparent purpose of the Japanese commander was to make a wheel to the right, with the Penhsihu garrison as a pivot, in order to turn the Russian right and to throw the whole of the enemy's army off its line of retreat and press it away to the east. General Oku, with the Left Army, opened the attack and quickly drove back the Russians in his front to Shihliho. On the 11th the Russians were reinforced, but after stubborn fighting the Japanese gained ground at all points, especially in front of Kuroki, where the resistance broke down towards evening and the Russians began to retreat. General Nodzu, with the Centre Army, co-operating in turn with his comrades to right and left, continued the attack on the night of the 11th and made the first capture of Russian guns. Opposed directly to Nodzu was General Zarubaieff's 4th Siberian Corps, forming the connecting link between the Russian wings, and the defeat of this corps exposed the flanks of the two Russian attacks and compelled Stackelberg to divert one of his corps to retrieve the situation. Oku, meanwhile, had been reinforced on the left, and upon the valour of his army depended the extent and nature of the Japanese success. It was not till the 12th that a decision was reached in this part of the field, but between dusk on that day and dawn on the 13th the Left Army carried out its purpose, and by means of a night attack flung back the Russian right to the line of the Shaho, where a defensive position had been prepared. General Nodzu and the Central Army also saw their enemy give ground at 2 p.m. on the afternoon of the 12th. The action of General Oku in

particular appears to have been of an important character, and the capture of twenty-five guns by his three columns is proof of the successful character of the engagement in this part of the field. The fighting was resumed on the 13th, and this day General Kuropatkin had no comfort to offer his Imperial master. He only spoke of retreats, and from his allusion to the necessity of supporting the Russian "advanced guards" from the "main positions" we are left to infer that the general reserve had been already drawn into the conflict and more or less committed.

The situation of the Russians on the evening of the 13th was indeed exceedingly serious. They had been driven back in every part of the field, they had lost heavily, and at least thirty-eight guns remained in their enemy's hands. Oku, like St. Cyr after Desaix's happy intervention at Marengo, was much nearer to the bridges on the enemy's line of retreat than was a large part of the opposing army; a little more hesitation, and the defeat threatened to become a rout. Kuropatkin issued the order that the troops should hold their ground at all costs during the 14th. This order applied with particular force to his right, since, if retreat became necessary, it was only under the shelter of a stout defence on this flank that the centre and left could regain the bridges and fords of the Hun.

We are, indeed, still without the conclusive evidence which prudent men await before talking of victory or defeat; but the conspicuous absence of Russian successes throughout a week of combat, and the serious losses suffered by the Tsar's armies, do not warrant any expectation that the judgment of the god of battles will be reversed. The Russians have made their effort, and very gallant it has been, but the effort has manifestly failed, and it only remains to ascertain how the closing scenes of this bloody drama will end.

The Times, October 18.

THE latest reports from the great battlefield of Manchuria place the defeat of the Russian army beyond a doubt. Thirteen thousand three hundred and thirty-three Russian dead have been left on the field, and on all sides the Tsar's army is in full retreat.

In the previous actions of the war it has been the rule to find from four to six wounded for every man killed, on such occasions as complete reports have been rendered. It is, therefore, not excessive to believe that the Russian casualties amount to over 60,000¹ men, exclusive of prisoners. As it is clear that General Kuropatkin brought into the field every man and gun of the Army of Manchuria, inclusive of the 6th Siberian Corps properly belonging to General Gripenberg's army, it is not possible to reckon the Russian combatants on the field at a lower figure than 260,000 sabres and rifles and 900 guns. The casualties, up to and including October 14, therefore amount, in all probability, to 25 per cent. of the force engaged.

Intelligent comprehension of the course of the action after Wednesday, October 12, has been obscured by Kuropatkin's repeated assurance that he had issued orders to all troops to hold their ground on and after the 13th. But news flashes quickly round the world, and something of this may have been intended to mislead. There is at least a strong probability that by the morning of the 13th the Russian general recognised that the game was up and that the attack had failed. The turning movement upon the Taitse under Stackelberg and Rennenkampf had totally miscarried with very heavy loss. Generals Zarubaieff and Ivanoff had been forced to give ground before Nodzu, and a further success of the enemy in this quarter threatened to pierce the centre of the widely-extended line. Finally, on the Russian right, Kuropatkin was himself witness

¹ "It was found that the total casualties were fully 75,000."—Lord Brooke, *An Eye-Witness in Manchuria*, p. 226.

of the desperate efforts of General Oku to seize the line of the Shaho, and he must have been well aware that any failure here would irretrievably condemn the whole army to disaster.

Despite assurances to the contrary, it is almost certain that by the 13th every unit of the army had been engaged save the 6th Corps, which Kuropatkin not improbably hoped to retain intact, and even the advance of this corps did not guarantee victory. In these depressing circumstances, and being as he was without a single favourable report from any part of the field, it is probable that Kuropatkin decided upon a retreat by midday on the 13th.

In view of the dangerous situation of the army it was indispensable that the Russian left should retreat first and that Zarubaieff in the centre should hold firm till the troops from the Taitse were due east of him. Further, that the Russian right on the Shaho should hold its ground at all costs till the night of Saturday, when the Russian centre would be in process of withdrawal in its turn. Even then the subsequent retreat of the Russian right across the Hun presented immense difficulties if the impetuous Oku persisted in his attacks. It was also necessary that strong rearguards, mainly of cavalry, should hold their ground and impose upon the Japanese commanders at each point, so that the infantry, guns, and convoys should obtain a good start.

We pick up the threads of the subsequent sequence of events from various sources other than Russian. On the night of the 13th the corps on the Russian left, leaving their cavalry in position, quietly withdrew, and, marching hard all through the night, placed themselves out of danger twenty-four hours later. It was not till the afternoon of the 14th that Kuroki discovered that the birds had flown. Then, according to Marshal Oyama, signs of wavering were seen in the Russian ranks, columns of pursuit were formed, and no doubt Rennenkampf's Cossacks promptly mounted and sped away as fast as their horses' legs could carry them.

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The Russians by this time should be masters of retreats, provided anything in this world can be learnt by practice, and under modern conditions nothing is more difficult than to ascertain whether an enemy holding a position is strong or weak. Kuroki for once was bluffed, and it is not for us to carp when we recall how often the same fate befell us in South Africa in practically identical circumstances. Zarubaieff in the centre took up the retreat in his turn on the 14th, and this day Nodzu forced him north of the Shaho, while Kuroki, hastening up with all his army, appears to have aligned himself on Nodzu's right after a forced march. We hear nothing of Prince Kanin and the Russians south of the Taitse, but the chances are that the latter also got away to the north under cover of the Cossack rearguards.

The success of this retreat depended upon the firm countenance of the troops on the Shaho, and upon the night of the 13th it was touch and go whether Oku would break through at this vital point. After a desperate struggle the centre of the Russian army corps on the Mandarin road was broken, and further away to the Russian right another dangerous flank attack gained ground. In this quarter General Bilderling commanded, having under him the 10th and 17th Western Army Corps, and possibly also the 1st, while the 6th Siberian Corps, acting as the army reserve, was stationed some way in the rear. It was apparently the 17th Corps that was broken by the attack of the Japanese, and the 6th Corps that re-established the fight after a terrible conflict had raged round Shahopao, which was taken and retaken several times during the night, but remained at last in Russian hands.

On the 14th General Oku continued his attack upon the Shaho line; his right took the heights near Hwangkiutien by 1 p.m.; his centre established itself on the hills south of Shahopao, while his left crossed the Shaho and repulsed several counter-attacks. The succeeding night passed quietly on this side, and thus

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thirty-six hours were gained for the Russian left and centre to make good their retreat to the rear.

On the 14th the customary deluge caused by the heavy firing began to inundate the battlefield; the roads became deep in mud, and all movements became difficult to execute. The troops on both sides must also have been nearly exhausted after five days' continuous fighting night and day. Nevertheless the indomitable Japanese pressed on, and by the evening of the 15th, despite stubborn resistance, Shahopao and Lamuntun were taken.

We have to congratulate our gallant allies upon a splendid victory won in a fair field with no favour, while they themselves would be the first to admit that the Russians fought with the utmost pluck and determination.

The Times, October 20.

MARSHAL OYAMA'S despatch explains the mishap that befell the detachment under Brigadier-General Yamada on the evening of Monday, October 17,¹ and disposes of the Russian hopes which were founded on an incident of no great importance.

The Russian right, as we know, had employed Sunday in delivering no less than seven counter-attacks upon the left column of General Oku's army, all of which were beaten back. General Yamada took part in the repulse of these attacks, and even penetrated the Russian line of battle, where he made prize of two guns.

The day of October 17 passed without any serious engagements throughout the whole front of the armies, and towards evening Yamada marched back on his return to camp. During his march he was enveloped and assailed on all sides by an overpowering force under General Putiloff, and after a fierce encounter he was

¹ According to Lord Brooke (*An Eye-Witness in Manchuria*) and Mr. Baring (*With the Russians in Manchuria*) this incident occurred on the night of October 16.

overwhelmed. His infantry, or such of them as survived, broke through and fought their way back, but with heavy loss, and at the price of the abandonment of six field and five mountain guns, the first Japanese cannon captured by the Russians during the war, while 600 Japanese dead were buried by the Russians on the hill.

The gallant stand of the Russians on the Shaho thus met with a very well-merited reward, and this success will do something, at least, to soften the bitterness of defeat; but the incident is without other importance, and it has had no serious consequences. It was, indeed, immediately followed by a fresh Russian misfortune, since on Monday night two fierce attacks delivered upon Oku's right column were repulsed with loss, while minor attacks at other points met with the same fate.

It is only when artillery leaves its comrades in the lurch and retreats precipitately that a force retiring under difficulties can make an absolute certainty of preserving all its guns; under modern conditions, and in such a difficult country as Manchuria, the loss of artillery during a retreat must often happen, and is no dishonour to the troops engaged, and least of all to the gunners themselves. The fine stand of the Russian right upon the Shaho from October 12 to 14 inclusive appears to have imposed upon the Japanese command, and from Saturday to Monday last the Japanese advance on this side has not been pressed, and the initiative in this part of the field, or a colourable imitation of it, has been allowed to pass into Russian hands. We hear, indeed, that the Russian forces on October 17 were increasing in front of the Japanese centre and left, but this report must be read in connection with Oyama's earlier message sent off at midnight on October 15-16, which stated that the Russians were insufficient in numbers on the right bank of the Shaho to give battle, and that only cavalry were offering resistance in front of the centre.

To observers at a distance it seemed natural, in such circumstances, that Oyama should press forward to the Hun to gather the full fruits of victory by ranging his troops within gunshot, at least, of the bridges and fords over which the Russian army appeared to be in full retreat. That course does not appear to have commended itself to Marshal Oyama, who seems to have unaccountably relapsed into what Müffling once described as "the digestion of joy caused by victory."

There may, indeed there must, be an explanation for this inaction, but it is not at present forthcoming. If we look to the other side we certainly see all the importance of a stand on the Shaho and of the repeated and impetuous attacks which seem to have arrested Oku's advance for three long days, but the suggestion which has been made that these attacks imply a renewed advance on Kuropatkin's part or an expectation of a prompt reversal of the verdict given by a week of fighting appears to be unworthy of credence.

The attacks themselves, as we see, are partial, disconnected, and repeated; they rather show nervousness, and bear no sort of resemblance to the procedure that we should expect in the event of the arrival of fresh forces and the turn of the tide in Russian favour. They were not even first reported by Kuropatkin, but by Sakharoff, the dabbler in trifles, and even he can only say, like a critic in Europe, that certain things "appear from reports" to be as he suggests. He only has it, in short, at second hand. There is evidently something behind, something that we have not been told, that would supply the key to the real situation if one or other of the commanders chose to tell all his mind.

There can be no doubt whatever that the Russian army has suffered one of the most overwhelming defeats of its history, and that after a fortnight's hard marching and nine days' hard fighting, with little food or sleep, it has been reduced by terrible losses and depressing

fatigues to a condition bordering on extenuation. All accounts, official and unofficial, agree that the men are utterly weary and done up, that the roads and fields are covered by crowds of wounded, and that Mukden has become one great hospital, with more patients than the medical staff can manage. We are told, too, by Reuter's Agent at the town, that the inability of the country to support a large army is becoming more and more evident, and we are almost asked to conclude from this statement that there has been a failure in supply to add to the Russian General's many other troubles. It is not possible to believe that any fresh reserves exist, since we have been expressly told, on the same authority, that every man and gun of the Manchurian army has been employed, and after Kuropatkin's order of the day no other course of action was to have been expected. He has staked the *maximum*, he has lost, and grim death, that villainous croupier, is now raking in his gains. For all these reasons the recrudescence of Russian activity on the Shaho cannot be attributed to any councils save those of despair. We do not know the number and condition of the bridges on the Hun, but the chances are that there have been extreme confusion and congestion at the points of crossing, and that the stand on the Shaho, so gallantly prolonged, has been the sole means of saving the right of the army and perhaps the centre too.

A good and sufficient reason for the Japanese inaction on the Shaho may be the exhaustion of the troops and the necessity for replenishing supplies and ammunition. Now that a very general anticipation of keen students of war has been realised, and that battles tend to run into weeks rather than hours or days, the famous remark "Hard pounding, gentlemen, let's see who will pound longest" must be addressed in particular to the staff of the line of communications and to the commanders of supply and ammunition columns and parks. After 1870 it was generally agreed

that troops could not be supplied on the battlefield by the normal functioning of rearward services, and that troops would have to take into action such iron rations and such ammunition as would carry them through a long battle lasting for two or three days. It is evident that we must enlarge our ideas upon these points now, when great armies are in the field, since we have no longer only wars of exhaustion, but also battles of the same character, and victory may often rest not so much with the last man as with the last round and the last biscuit.

Who ventures to say the amount of ammunition required for a fortnight's battle, continued by day and night, between armies provided with quick-firing artillery and modern rifles? Evidently the supply must be immense to prevent paralysis, and it is no matter for wonder that Kuropatkin himself, after Liau-yang, found cause to upbraid his gunners for running through their ammunition in a few hours. Neither side will, of course, tell us when they run short during an action; but we shall probably learn, in due season, that the expenditure of ammunition has been unprecedented, and that many units have been out of action for long owing to this cause.

Whatever the true reason of the stagnation on the Shaho, it will certainly afford no one any surprise if many mistakes are made in the command of great armies by generals on both sides who have no experience of the leading of such masses of men save what they are now in course of accumulating day by day. How many of the great marshals of the Empire could Napoleon dare trust with the command of 100,000 or even 50,000 men? Davoust, Massena, Soult, perhaps, and one or two more, but most of his generals were certainly not fit to command a larger number than 30,000 men. Even Napoleon himself, like any common mortal, made mistakes, and allowed Mortier in 1805 and Vandamme in 1813 to be attacked and overwhelmed by the enemy's united columns. Can we expect a

Kuropatkin or Oyama to fail to err where Napoleon sinned?

Modern science, it is true, enables a directing staff to retain close touch with commanders, no matter how far away; but only experience can utilise these new powers to the utmost advantage, while the withdrawal of the personal influence of the commander from the critical points of contact makes it more and more indispensable that subordinate officers of all ranks should possess initiative and the resolution necessary to carry on the battle when unforeseen events occur.

It is not our business, as the allies of Japan, to criticise the leading of her armies with anything but extreme circumspection, or to use the far-reaching influence of the British press to exalt a renown which the Russian commander has done comparatively little as yet to deserve. But when results are summed up, neither Oyama nor Kuropatkin can expect, any more than Napoleon, to find history oblivious of faults.

We may, for example, find that history will say that the prudent and careful strategy which united the three Japanese armies on the battlefield of Liauyang, after a march through the mountains that gave the enemy no chance of a successful counter-stroke, was a great and praiseworthy operation that went near to genius, but that when these armies were thus united Oyama was unable to profit by an unusually favourable situation. History may say that the Japanese Headquarters Staff, from Kaiping onwards, never adequately realised the asset they possessed in Kuroki's army at the Motienling, that they continued to throw needless numbers to their left, giving themselves up to the pleasures of a stern chase when they were in a position to act much more effectively by their right, had genius rather than talent distinguished the command. History may add that Oyama might have drawn two or more divisions to him from Port Arthur for the purpose of the battle of Liauyang, and that his

failure to utilise his central situation in this manner detracted much from the completeness of his victory.

Kuropatkin also will have to run the gauntlet of criticism, since success in war is a general's business, his only excuse indeed for existing, and if he fails he becomes as bankrupt in his business as any grocer does in his. The world only worships success, and history, inclining before mammon, is severe upon the vanquished. We can hardly expect the historian to waste flowers of speech upon a general who, in this last battle, staked success upon a turning movement in the mountains by a column consisting of two cavalry divisions and infantry with guns intended for use in the plains. Cavalry, of course, has occasionally scaled mountains, and field guns, of a specially cumbrous type, have now and again been dragged up gradients of forty degrees, as at Schwartzkop, or even up precipices, as at Colesberg; but when the fate of an army depends upon success, and the tops of the precipices are lined by victorious Japanese with some talent for fighting, the procedure is not exactly the best calculated to advance the interests of the Tsar.

History, in short, will have much to say of the errors committed on both sides in this war, but who will wonder? The senior generals of Japan grew up to man's estate when their country had not yet begun its modern process of development. It is a marvel that they have done so well, and have accommodated themselves so admirably to their new surroundings, and to all the machinery of modern warfare, to which, in their youth and early manhood, they were completely strangers. Kuropatkin, again, as we know, was a talented chief of staff to that genius Skobelev; the one supplied what the other lacked, and the two completed each other. So, too, did Napoleon and Berthier, but no one ever thought of making Berthier commander-in-chief, and it is a matter for consideration whether the very qualities which go to make an admirable chief of staff are not closely allied to the defects that render

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a man unfit to hold a great command. As to the faults committed at the Shaho battle, we can add little to the forecast we made before the battle was begun. The Russian army was neither good enough, relatively speaking, nor numerous enough, to have anticipated victory from the operation on which it was launched, and it is therefore needless to seek other reasons for failure in secondary and contributing causes.

CHAPTER XXXV¹

THE NORTH SEA INCIDENT

ON a calm night, and without the slightest provocation and excuse, the Baltic Fleet has opened fire upon a fleet of trawlers engaged upon their customary business in well-known fishing grounds; it has sunk British vessels, and killed and wounded British subjects. Worst of all, it has then fled from the scene of this exploit, and has taken refuge in precipitate evasion without caring or daring to inquire into the results of its lawlessness, leaving its victims to shift for themselves. This incident is either the result of purpose or of panic, and it is difficult to say which reason covers the Baltic squadron with greater ignominy.

It is for the Russian admiral in command to declare whether this act of war was done with intention or not; the onus of proof that it was not done with intention rests with him. It may be hard to credit that anybody save a lunatic would be guilty of deliberately firing upon defenceless vessels in the open sea. But the Russian navy has a very bad record in this war, and we are perfectly justified in believing the worst of a service which has already sunk two British vessels, captured several others without a shadow of excuse or a shade of legality, and has won no triumphs against the Japanese, save over ships totally deprived of means of resistance and reprisal.

Even if we charitably assume the second alternative

¹ From *The Times* of October 25 and November 15, 1904.

and allow that the act was due to fear, this pitiful tragedy only places the Russian navy in a more contemptible light. It has been proved that the Hull trawlers were carrying all their lights, that they saw the Russian vessels approaching, that the latter turned their searchlights upon the fishing steamers, and that Russian torpedo craft ran up to inspect the British vessels, and then returned to their warships. Further, it is clear that the leading Russian vessels passed through the trawlers without firing, and that the firing was begun by the warships in rear. Whether the fusillade which was then opened lasted for ten minutes or half an hour, and whether thirty shots were fired or three hundred, is of no great moment; the fact remains that indiscriminate firing took place at close range, and that the squadron was so terror-struck by the sight of fishing boats that it took no steps whatever to rectify the mistake, or to save the victims of its fright, and incontinently fled. The fact of this flight engages the responsibility of the admiral in command, whether he was with the van of the column or not; for, despite the futile excuses advanced by officials of the Russian Embassy, it is impossible to believe that the firing and the damage done by the firing can have escaped the Russian admiral's observation. Equally impertinent are the suggestions from the same quarter that the trawlers brought their fate upon themselves by drawing too near to the Russian fleet. The North Sea does not belong to Russia, and her fleet proceeding over the high seas is just as much bound to observe the rules of the road at sea as our own or any other fleet is bound to do.

The more this affair is considered the worse it appears, and there can be no question that it amply justifies extreme measures on our part. We hear already of strong despatches, and no doubt Lord Lansdowne will have taken energetic action. But the outrage was committed upon the British flag upon the high seas, and there is a strong feeling that it must be atoned for by satisfaction on the high seas by those responsible for its perpetration.

We see just as little preparation and forethought on the part of the Admiralty to-day as we had to notice when the *Peterburg* and *Smolensk* were culpably allowed to disappear from sight and knowledge. It has been proved over and over again during the war that whenever Russian vessels put to sea, their sailing is immediately followed by an outrage upon the British flag. The Admiralty appear to live in a world that has no real existence. They station the Home Fleet in Scottish waters at a moment when they knew, or should have known, that the Russian squadron was approaching our shores, and the Mediterranean squadron up in a dead angle of the Eastern Mediterranean. The cruiser squadron is laid up for repairs, and is not available for action. The gunboats that are presumed to protect fisheries disappeared. Fortunately, however, the Channel Squadron is at Gibraltar, and in a position there to demand explanation, apology, and redress, or to demonstrate that we have the power to impose respect for our flag.

On the most charitable hypothesis the Baltic squadron has proved itself to be irresponsible, and, as such, a public danger. If the nerves of its crews are in such a state of dreadful tension, it is not fit to be trusted alone upon the trade routes of the world. What happened yesterday to the trawlers may happen to-morrow, or any dark night during the next three months, to great liners or to tramps upon the frequented highways of the ocean which the squadron proposes to traverse; and if its actions cannot be brought otherwise under control, it may become necessary to have it convoyed by British warships, in order to protect it from the nightmares that are conjured up by its disordered imagination.

There can be no doubt that, in view of the international lawlessness of the Russian navy, of which this is not the only instance, though it appeals more strongly to popular imagination in this country, our government might quite properly have decided before this to forbid acts of war outside a specified zone in the Far East in order to secure that safety and regularity for the

sea-borne trade of the world that neutrals have the right to expect. It is not too late to lay down that law to Russia even now. But this is at present secondary to the demand for ample and immediate apology and satisfaction from the authors of this disgraceful deed. The question is, Can we obtain any redress that will satisfy opinion save from the Russian navy itself?

The proceedings of the Peace Conference at The Hague in 1899 attracted such little interest in England, and the serious results achieved met with such scant recognition at the time, that it is no matter for surprise if the working of the machinery devised by the Third Commission of the Congress is very imperfectly understood by the general public. Nearly every one, however, who took part in the Peace Conference recognised the fact that history would accord a more honourable place to the achievements of that international Parliament than British public opinion bestowed upon it, and that the tree would at last be known by its fruits. The machinery prepared has already been employed with good effect, but it has remained for the present hour to disclose a very important means devised for arresting, in its full course, impending war, and for intervening, almost at the eleventh hour, between the bared blades of two opposing nations.

The composition, in certain special cases, of international commissions of inquiry, formed part, and a very important part, of the labours of the Third Commission which dealt with the vital problem of arbitration and kindred matters. Over that Commission M. Léon Bourgeois presided with that dignity and spirit of fairness expected from the first delegate of France, while the valuable and luminous report upon all the subjects dealt with by this Commission was drafted by the Belgian Senator, the Chevalier Descamps, whose services to the cause of international peace are too well known to be recapitulated. If there be some fiery spirits who grow restless at the delay in effecting a settlement entailed by international inquiry, it may be pointed out

that delay was one of the principal objects aimed at in this humane conception of the conference. The idea was that in certain circumstances nations became justly or unjustly excited, and that it was at this very moment that delay was absolutely indispensable, so that all the facts might be duly set down in order by impartial men, public opinion quieted by a judicial presentment of the whole truth, and spirits allowed to cool by exposure to the air for a certain lapse of time. M. de Martens, who had charge of the Russian case, and, it may be added, conducted it throughout with signal moderation and good sense, desired that international inquiry should be made obligatory when neither the honour nor the vital interests of states were in question. His desire was that nations should be secured from the impressions of the moment, and that feelings, based possibly on ignorance of the true facts, should not be allowed to imperil or envenom international relations. He considered, and many agreed with him, that these results could only be achieved if the obligatory character of international inquiry were universally recognised.

It would occupy too much space to enter at length into the reasons why the obligatory clause of this proposal was rejected, nor would it, perhaps, tend to international harmony to name the nations and the particular delegates who opposed M. de Martens' proposal. It is enough to say that a compromise was reached by the deletion of the obligatory clause, and that Article 9, Chapter III., was finally drafted and approved as follows:---

"In differences of an international nature involving neither honour nor vital interests, and arising from a difference of opinion on points of fact, the signatory Powers recommend that the parties, who have not been able to come to an agreement by means of diplomacy, should, as far as circumstances allow, institute an International Commission of Inquiry, to facilitate a solution of these differences by elucidating the facts by means of an impartial and conscientious investigation."

It was also considered advisable to make certain rules for the composition and procedure of such Commissions of Inquiry, in order that their action should be both effective and beneficent. Hence arose Article 10, which laid down that they should be constituted by special agreement between the parties in conflict, and that the convention for an inquiry should define the facts to be examined and the extent of the powers to be delegated to the commissioners nominated. To the convention was also left the power of regulating the procedure to be adopted, while, as regards forms and time limits, liberty was allowed, so that such matters might either be left to the convention to settle or be regulated by the commissioners themselves when they met.

The Russian delegates at the Conference had their own views as to the system under which the commissioners should be appointed, but these failed to give satisfaction, and a preference was shown for the procedure recommended in the convention dealing with tribunals of arbitration. This procedure is described in Article 82, Chapter III., of that convention. This article states that the duties of arbitrator may be conferred upon one or more persons designated by the parties at their pleasure or chosen from among the members of the permanent Court of Arbitration. In the event of disagreement, each party chooses two arbitrators, and these four select an umpire. In the case of failure to agree upon this point, a third Power, chosen by common accord, is asked to select the umpire. Finally, should agreement still be wanting, each party selects a different Power and these two Powers select the umpire in concert. In the present case it would be, of course, improper to use the terms arbitrator or umpire at all, since the commissioners at the inquiry have no arbitral functions whatsoever. It is merely the procedure of Article 82 that is adopted, in principle, for the selection of commissioners and president.

The next point that naturally arose was the character of the information and the evidence to be submitted to

the Commission of Inquiry. It was felt that Powers would have a natural reluctance to submit details which concerned national defences, plans of campaign, secret orders, and so forth, and consequently Article 12 was drafted broadly so as to take into due account the vital interests of the Powers concerned. It laid down that the parties engaged to supply, "as fully as they may think possible," all the means and facilities necessary "to enable it [the commission] to be completely acquainted with and to accurately understand the facts in question."

The concluding Articles 13 and 14 deal with the report of the Commission. It is laid down that the latter shall present their report, signed by all the members, to the two parties; that the report shall be limited to "a statement of facts," and finally that the conflicting Powers are left "entire freedom as to the effect to be given to this statement."

It is very desirable that the public should thoroughly understand the nature of the conventions signed at The Hague and subsequently ratified, since failure to appreciate their bearings and their scope may easily lead to unjust aspersions upon the conduct of the inquiry by one government or the other.

It is abundantly evident that in the present instance the world has made a step in advance of the ideas of the House in the Wood. The generous intentions of the delegates at The Hague were constantly thwarted by references to the "honour and vital interests" of States, and it will be observed that the constitution of the proposed Commission of Inquiry was not even recommended in the event of the honour or vital interests of Powers being engaged.

They are, in the present case, very much engaged. The Prime Minister himself, in his speech at Southampton, stated in the plainest terms that our honour was engaged, since, in dealing with the Russian admiral's report, he entered a most emphatic protest against "an allegation which affects, I think, our honour as neutrals."

If, again, the security of all British subjects who go down to the sea in ships, and the safety of these ships themselves, are not a vital interest to Great Britain, then truly it is hard to name one. We have, therefore, gone a long step further than the delegates at The Hague ever imagined possible. But it is also true that the honour and vital interests of Russia are equally involved, and it is therefore right to conclude that if there has been a concession at all, it bears a mutual character.

We may some of us hold very strongly that this matter should never have been submitted to international inquiry at all, and that it does not come within the four corners of the competence of Article 9 of The Hague Convention on Arbitration. That is a perfectly legitimate point of view, but, as it is not that of the two governments, it is only right that the principle of inquiry should be now accepted loyally with all its consequences.

It will be observed that the onus of bringing forward all needful evidence rests with each government concerned, and that pressure or suggestion to secure the attendance of witnesses or the production of material evidence is not justified in so far as the evidence to be tendered by the other side is concerned. The full and entire responsibility for presenting the Russian case rests with Russia, and not only this, but also the initiative of action taken subsequent to the report of the commissioners. There is nothing but the ban of public excommunication by the world's opinion to apply to a country which either does not supply the requisite evidence or fails to act upon it after the report of the commissioners is presented. Nothing, at least, save compulsion *vi et armis*, since the *ultima ratio* still remains at our disposal if satisfaction, subsequent to the report of the commissioners, be not obtained.

CHAPTER XXXVI¹

THE SITUATION AT THE END OF NOVEMBER

ADMIRAL ALEXEIEFF retires from the scene of his many failures, leaving Kuropatkin with a broken and dispirited army to get out of the mess as best he can. A great sigh of relief goes up from the entire army of Russia ; and Kuropatkin, perhaps for the first time in the course of the war, finds himself with a free hand, or at least as free as Japanese manacles admit. What will he do ?

In view of his well-known desire to retreat until he has sufficient men to authorise a serious offensive movement ; in view of the proof recently given that he has not these numbers, and cannot hope to have them for some months ; in view, lastly, of the stream of reinforcements promised to him, his natural course of action, provided it were practicable, would be to retire upon these reinforcements, and await a more favourable moment for action. He knows perfectly well that Port Arthur is *in extremis*, and that upon the fall of that fortress his enemy's numbers will be augmented. The spirits of his army, despite Putiloff's *coup* upon Yamada at the close of the Shaho battle, are certainly very low ; he has every reason to break off contact if he can, and spend the winter in reorganising and restoring the efficiency of his beaten army. For, just as the war is intensely unpopular in Russia, so, among his own officers

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of November 2, 26 and 29, 1904.

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and men, the same feeling is predominant. Every single witness, friendly to Russia or the reverse, tells the same tale. "The whole army detests Manchuria, where it thinks that it has gone astray." So says M. Naudeau, and all his colleagues confirm his words.

Although the chances of war, with armies in such close proximity, are not matters upon which we can speculate with safety, the friends of Japan need not disturb themselves on account of Oyama's inactivity. The recent battles have neither exhausted the Japanese army nor decreased its confidence. An army that has met its enemy's whole strength in fair fight, has taken from it 45 guns, buried 13,000 of its soldiers, and pursued it for 15 miles, has no cause for any feeling but satisfaction.

But the railway was only completed to Liauyang early in the month, and time has scarcely allowed the amassing of the vast stores of food and ammunition required for the continuous activity of a great army. The expenditure of ammunition in the last battle exceeded everything that either army anticipated. We are told that the Russian army alone fired 130,000 shells and 5,000,000 rounds of small-arm ammunition. In any case, the expenditure has been unheard of, and time is required to prepare for a fresh contest of equal, or perhaps greater, fury. Until the Japanese are thoroughly prepared for their next move, they are not likely to break camp.

Moreover, the days of Port Arthur are numbered. For the attack which began on October 26 the Japanese have made preparations on a much more extensive scale than before; they have brought up a large number of heavy guns, and, if progress is slow, it is apparently continuous, while the defensive powers of the garrison are lessening day by day. It would be, no doubt, a cause for legitimate satisfaction if the fortress could be taken on the birthday of the Emperor of Japan, which occurs to-morrow; but the arrangements of the besiegers will not be tied down to any special date, and all

we can feel reasonably sure of is that Port Arthur will fall in the course of the next few weeks. It is neither Stössel nor his gallant garrison that the Japanese are after, but those coveted ships that lie within sight of Japanese eyes, but not yet within reach of their hands.

We have heard little of the Russian warships since the action in which Admiral Vithöft fell. But it is almost certain that the Port Arthur dock, arsenal, and workshops are in ruins, that no repairs have been possible for weeks past, and that much damage has been done to the remaining ships by the fire of the enemy. In view of the anticipated early decision at Port Arthur, there is no special reason why Oyama should push on till this chapter is closed, and he is justified in believing that, should Kuropatkin have any further inclination to avert the impending doom of the great fortress, he must once more lead his men to the attack, and once more risk the safety of his army in circumstances of grave disadvantage.

The Vice-King, or *Namiestnik* of the Tsar, is well advised to retire from the scene before the curtain falls over the last act of the bloody drama at Port Arthur. He now accepts defeat with all its consequences, and hastens to leave Manchuria before the Rising Sun waves once more over Port Arthur, symbolising the ruin of all his ambitions and his schemes. If we ask ourselves why he has been allowed for so long to mismanage the affairs of Russia in the Far East, we must seek the reason in the patriarchal system of the Russian Empire, which has indeed many faults, but does not include among them disloyalty to its servants. In all parts of the Russian public service, diplomacy included, old servants are retained till they totter into their graves, whether they are efficient and whether they are not. Seldom indeed is a Russian viceroy, ambassador, general, or admiral discredited and disavowed. As a system of government it may have its faults; but at least it causes Russia to be well and loyally, if not always intelligently, served.

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Those who laud Kuropatkin to the skies will now be able to show proof that he is worthy of the flatteries lavished upon him. We should rather say that more evidence to character is required before we grow enthusiastic over a general who has weakly permitted his armies, time after time, to undertake operations he knew to be rash and ill-advised, and instead of stemming the current has allowed himself to be carried away with it.

Admiral Alexeieff arrived at St. Petersburg on November 10, after a rapid journey from Kharbin. He was received without ceremony, and drove away without escort. A few days later he was appointed a member of the Council of the Empire, and, as his staff in Manchuria has been broken up and distributed among the new armies, we must consider the admiral shelved and his vice-regal career at an end. He has not, it is true, as yet been relieved of his functions as Imperial Lieutenant in the Far East, but he has been deprived, at his own urgent request, of the command-in-chief of the troops, and *de facto* he has ceased to rule.

General Kuropatkin became, on October 27, Commander-in-Chief of the military and naval forces at the seat of war; the long conflict is over, and the general has won. The Imperial rescript addressed to him declared that "your military experience, strengthened by your action in Manchuria, makes me feel confident that you will break the obstinacy of the enemy's forces at the head of your glorious army, and will thereby assure peace in the Far East to Russia."

Shortly after his return to the Russian capital the admiral was interviewed by two French correspondents. They did not mince matters with the fallen satrap. Said M. Gaston Dru to him, "People declare you pushed Kuropatkin forward, that you are responsible for the check at Wafangkau, and that you imposed the offensive upon the army before the Shaho." The admiral is made to reply in the following terms:

"Jamais je n'ai imposé mes vues au généralissime,

avec lequel je vécus toujours en excellents termes. Il fit ce qu'il voulut. Dès le début des hostilités, je considérai que mon rôle était de l'aider dans toute la mesure de mes forces. Je ne lui ai demandé nullement de marcher en avant lors de l'affaire de Wafangkau. Et j'appris la publication de l'ordre du jour qui précéda l'offensive sur le Shaho en arrivant à Mukden, sans doute après que vous le connaissiez déjà ici."

It is necessary to register this document for what it is worth *à titre d'histoire*, but at the same time to allow it to remain under the category of the story that is good until another is told. If we could take this assurance at its face value and to the foot of the letter, we should have to conclude that the admiral has had some injustice done to him, and that Kuropatkin is solely responsible for the Russian mistakes and defeats. But there are many ways in which a viceroy can interfere in military operations and organisation, can offer suggestions not readily distinguishable from orders, and can yet stand clear of the reproach of imposing his views upon the general in command. The evidence that Alexeieff interfered with Kuropatkin's freedom of action and hampered his plans comes to us from too many sources to be lightly put aside. Nor, it will be observed, does the admiral explicitly disclaim the authorship of the famous proclamation to the army before the Shaho. All he says is that he only learnt of its publication after his arrival at Mukden. It is important to clear up the point, since, if we can assume that Kuropatkin wrote or dictated the famous order to which his name is appended, we should have to assume that the general will take the very first opportunity of making good his words, especially as the inflexible will of the Tsar was given such a prominent place in the document, and the terms paraded before the world with such a great flourish of trumpets.

We have, moreover, to consider that the relations between Alexeieff and Kuropatkin have been something of a test case of the attitude assumed towards each other

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by a strong Viceroy and a strong Commander-in-Chief in a great dependency in time of war. It is conceivable, for example, that such a situation might one day arise in India, and that the scathing criticisms of the Pflugs and Gilinskys of Alexeieff's superfluous staff might find their counterpart in the unseasonable obstruction of the military member of the Viceroy's Council. What we have to ensure is that, in case of war, the Commander-in-Chief is free to devote himself to the prosecution of the war and nothing else; that the responsibilities and the duties of the civil and military elements of the Administration are accurately determined in the event of war, and that all possible causes of friction are eliminated in advance. It is true that, in their last terms, systems and their success or failure depend more upon the character and individuality of the men who control them than upon the inherent merits or defects of the systems themselves¹; but that does not detract from our duty of foreseeing, as far as we are able, points of antagonism and of conflict, and of removing them before war is upon us.

Meanwhile, Kuropatkin, with a free hand and a promise of support limited only by the restrictions of troop-transport, is in process of reorganising his army. He has found nothing better than to conform to the procedure of his enemy, and to divide his army into three, each of four army corps and two brigades of rifles. Each army, when complete, will number 150,000 men, and by the spring the Russians anticipate that they will be able to take the field with something like half a million of men and a formidable train of artillery. General Linievitch has been very properly given command of the First Army, consisting of the old Siberian and East Siberian troops, while General Kharkevitch, formerly Quartermaster-General of the Army of Manchuria, becomes Chief of the Staff of this army.

¹ Compare Lord Curzon's speech in Council at Simla, July 18, 1905: "I expect that the new system, like the old, will depend in the main upon the personal equation for its success or failure."

Linievitch is already at Mukden, and the organisation of this army should be far advanced ; but the troops composing it have fought more and suffered more than any other part of the army, and require heavy reinforcements before they resume operations.

The Second Army, under General Gripenberg, will not be ready for many weeks ; but the exact date of its concentration cannot yet be fixed, owing to the uncertainty which prevails respecting the capabilities of the railway for troop-transport during the winter, especially on the new circum-Baikal section, and also owing to the doubt whether the new army corps, or the rifles, or, lastly, the drafts to make good losses, will have precedence upon the line.

The Third Army is under General Baron Kaulbars, with General Martson as Chief of the Staff ; but at present Kaulbars has not left Western Russia. The troops of this army, like those of the First, have suffered heavily, and will require very large reinforcements before they are up to strength. Many changes have taken place in the higher commands. Both the divisional commanders of the 1st Army Corps have been relieved of their commands ; so has the commander of the 10th Corps, while both the 10th and 17th Army Corps lost the best part of one of their artillery brigades at the Shaho. It will, indeed, be an affair of many months before the Russian army is able to resume operations with anything approaching the strength which would normally be represented by the units intended to form part of it. If we put down the present effectives of the field armies under Kuropatkin at 250,000 men, we are probably not far from the truth ; and we cannot anticipate that the 450,000 or 500,000 men required will be assembled before the break-up of the winter, even if all circumstances are favourable.

There has not been any question as yet of considerable reinforcements of cavalry. The 4th Don Cossack Division has arrived and has been engaged, but the difficulty of transporting horses in the winter and the

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want of forage have made it impracticable to send out large bodies of mounted men, or even to keep efficient and complete those already in the field.

On the other hand, the Russian artillery has been considerably reinforced. By direction of various *prikazes*, notably those of June 15 and September 7, the total number of mountain batteries has been increased from the original two to twelve in all, each of eight guns, while twelve ammunition columns have been organised to accompany them. In addition to these mountain batteries there were formed, under *prikaze* of August 16, the 4th and 5th Regiments of Howitzers, each of four six-gun batteries, with corresponding ammunition columns, besides a regiment of siege artillery of ten companies. When the war began there were only two howitzer batteries with the army, but with the additions noticed, all of which have probably arrived, Kuropatkin should have sixty howitzers on the ground, apparently of the 6-in. Engelhardt type, not so good as some patterns in other armies, but still a useful weapon, and promising to afford valuable support to the troops in the field.

So far as the Russian army is concerned—that is to say, in view of its heavy losses and of the reinforcements which may reach it throughout the winter—we can quite understand that there are many inducements to play the waiting game. The army has wrecked itself in the vain endeavour to relieve Port Arthur, and though the fatal magnet is still there to distract the mind and disturb the resolutions of the Russian commander, it may be that the Tsar has at last arrived at the conclusion that the price his army has had to pay for the effort has been too high. Colonel Gädke tells us that the relief of Port Arthur has been abandoned, and he may be right, even though his prophecies are usually wrong.

The Russians, veering round from their opinions before the Shaho, now declare that Oyama's army is superior in numbers. They and their friends and allies

allege, however, that Japan has almost touched bottom, and, after describing the various categories of the Japanese army antecedent to the war, conclude with delight that Japan is almost exhausted, and that when the Russian glacier, with its moraine of 500,000 sabres and bayonets, begins to move in the spring, it will carry all before it. All they can see to reinforce the Japanese army is a levy of peasants with inferior arms and badly led. The final success of Russia follows as a matter of course, and it only remains to dictate terms of peace.

There is one Russian, however, who is not quite so sanguine. M. Nemirovitch Danchenko, of the *Russkoe Slovo*, tears himself for once from the pleasing pursuit of phrase painting and condescends to tell us what his conclusions are with regard to the situation. He says that the Japanese reinforcements which have recently arrived are as well-trained, disciplined, and brave as the veteran troops, and that Russia, with the forces she possesses, is reduced to the defensive. He declares that it is puerile to think that the impetus of Japan is arrested because she is an Asiatic Power. We have before us, he declares, a military Power of the first rank, persevering, active, and energetic, a Power which has prepared for this war for seven years, and has studied in every detail the theatre of war and the forces of its enemy. What is only a colonial war for Russia is, he asserts, a national war for Japan; everything is weighed, and even battles are treated like mathematical problems.

Can anything, in fact, be more misleading than to base calculations of future numbers upon Japan's military strength before the war? The Boers fell into that error, and it cost them their independence. Japan has a practically inexhaustible reservoir of men, and long ago she prepared a scheme under which new levies of infantry can be completely trained within three months.

Six months ago, in reviewing the work of the German mission to Japan, we had to point out

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that the main distinction between the old order of military policy and the new lay in the creation by the latter in time of war of reserve field armies, and we had to observe that, should the war prove long and exhausting, victory would only remain with Japan if she proved capable of placing fresh levies of trained soldiers in the field and of maintaining the effectives of those units already under arms. All the talent that surrounds the Emperor of Japan, with Yamagata for its directing spirit, has had, we may almost say, nothing else to do but to prepare in advance for contingencies that could be foreseen long before the need arose. We know little of what has been done, but we know at least that an ample number of men have become available by a change in the terms of liability to service recently reported by the Tokio correspondent of *The Times*, while it is a matter of notoriety that, despite many months of war, Japanese units always go into battle up to their full strength.

Only numbers can annihilate, and we can regard it as assured that, ever since Prince Khilkoff gave proof of his competence, and Liauyang was fought, Japanese organisers at home have been steadily working up to the point which is fixed for them by the circumstances of the case with almost mathematical precision. It is true that the want of trained officers has been, and still may be, felt, but let us look on the other side and regard the thousands of reserve officers Russia is digging up to make good the very extraordinary waste in the commissioned ranks at the front. Japan could have organised her corps of officers, had she desired to do so, as a caste apart *à la Prusse*, at once the strength, the glory, and the weakness of the German army. There were many who advised her to do so, but she wisely refrained, and left open the door to merit wherever found. Her non-commissioned ranks are recruited from the intellectual *élite* of the nation, and as officers fall they can be, and they are, replaced from the good and tried non-commissioned ranks—men who are probably

superior in very many ways to the average regimental officer of the Russian army, and have been proved by hard service in the field.

The problem before the organising staff at Tokio is to place in the field, month by month, such considerable forces that by the time the Russian concentration is completed the Japanese army may be of equivalent or greater strength. There is no reason why Japan should fail in this undertaking, since she has fortunately elected to fight out the war within easy reach of the sea, as we thought it would be in her interest to do before the war began. Nothing that we are able to observe, save the loss of the command of the sea, need prevent her from retaining the advantages she has won.

Admiral Rozhdestvensky—unscathed, unchallenged, unpunished—continues his progress towards the East with truly Russian deliberation. He left Libau on October 16 at 1 a.m. A month later he steamed away from the French coaling station of Dakar, in West Africa, with five battleships (the *Kniaz Suvaroff*, *Alexander III.*, *Borodino*, *Orel*, and *Oslyabya*), three cruisers (the *Admiral Nakhimoff*, *Dnūtri Donskoi*, and *Aurora*), five transports, a hospital ship, and a store-ship. The remainder of the squadron, joined by several Volunteer Fleet steamers from the Black Sea, all under the commercial flag, was at Suda Bay, in Crete, on November 10. This division, consisting of two battleships, three cruisers, six destroyers, and nine transports, under Rear-Admiral Fölkersahm, left for Port Said at 3 p.m. on November 21. The Suez Canal authorities took the Russian squadron under their wing, and used their utmost endeavours to facilitate the supply and progress of the ships. Dogberry, it would appear, has moved house to Cairo. On November 16 a belated division from the Baltic, consisting of the cruisers *Oleg*, *Izumrud*, the Volunteer Fleet auxiliary cruisers *Rion* (ex-*Peterburg*), *Dnieper* (ex-*Smolensk*), and *Terek*, with eight torpedo boats, left Libau.

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Thus, a month after setting out, the fifteen ships forming the main division of the squadron had covered one-fifth of their journey at the average rate of three miles an hour; the second division of twenty vessels had not done quite so well; while the third of thirteen ships had barely started from home. Considering the plight of Port Arthur, a conscientious historian will not describe this effort as indecent haste. If this rate of speed is maintained, and all three divisions are united before action, it will be the middle of April next year before the admiral, unscathed or otherwise, appears in Japanese waters. It is possible that progress may be more rapid hereafter, therefore we cannot draw any definite conclusions at present; but, so far as things have gone, the action of the Russian navy appears to bear a more intimate relation to the execution of a general offensive movement in the spring than to any hope or intention of dominating the strategic situation in the theatre of war at the present moment.

The Lord High Admiral of the Russian Naval Forces in the Far East is, by rescript, General Kuropatkin. Skrydloff, the senior naval officer on the station—that is to say, on land—is under Kuropatkin's orders, and has to journey to Mukden to receive them. It seems likely that we shall soon learn some valuable lessons in naval strategy. The Japanese Ministers held a Council before the Emperor on November 14, and it is to be presumed that the general course of national effort by sea and land was once more passed in review, and decisions taken respecting future action.

The question of the supply of Welsh coal to the Baltic squadron has caused the Japanese some disquiet; but it is not quite such an easy affair to arrange in conformity with the interests of our ally as Baron Suyematsu appears to think. We cannot arrest the whole activity of a great national industry, and, short of that, nothing can prevent the use of our coal by the intermediaries between Russia and Cardiff. The Committee of Imperial Defence have taken a great step in advance by

the denial of British ports and territorial waters to the use of belligerent ships and their colliers, and by this wise act have already justified their existence. The President of the Cardiff Chamber of Commerce has recently stated, at the mayoral banquet on November 22, that in order to provide large extra supplies for our own navy at short notice, the best way, in his opinion, is to keep the collieries working at full pressure, so that by a sudden stoppage of exports we could ensure a large quantity for ourselves at short notice. It is evident that, if we stop exports now, some collieries will be shut down, and the supply we may require will not be forthcoming at need. From this Baron Suyematsu will see that we should, by acting as he appears to suggest, risk the ruin of one of our chief industries, imperil the supply of the navy, and yet serve Japan in no material manner, since the coal would readily be obtained elsewhere, not perhaps so good, but good enough for the tortoise fleet from the Baltic.

CHAPTER XXXVII¹

DE PROFUNDIS

ALTHOUGH the destruction of the Pacific squadron at Port Arthur during the second week of December was due to causes which had their origin far back in the history of the war, the dramatic incident of the ultimate ruin of these ships by the artillery of the besieging army yields to none other in importance and interest for a maritime Power. Out of the depths where these sea-monsters lie wrecked and forlorn there arises a solemn warning for nations and navies that are blind to the teachings of history and presume to improve upon the principles and the practice of the great masters of the art of war.

If the cost in human life of the Japanese attacks upon Port Arthur has been great, we must also admit that the main object of these sacrifices has been at last attained. Thanks to her army Japan has reaped the harvest sown by her earlier naval successes. It has been solely thanks to the intimate co-operation of army and navy that this result has been achieved, and that the numerous and powerful Russian Pacific squadron is now numbered with fleets that have lived. This great result, achieved without the loss of a single warship by Japan in battle, has been secured by the sacrifice of lives rather than of ships, nor can we say that any cost can be too great to secure that immeasurable advantage to an insular Power—the command of the sea.

¹ Compiled from an article in *The Times* of December 17, 1904.

For us, the main objective of the Japanese at Port Arthur has been always the ships. Now that these vessels are done with there is no need for further costly assaults at Port Arthur. The siege can pursue its ordinary course, and it becomes a matter of comparative unimportance whether the fortress fall sooner or later. There is only one harbour east of Suez which the Baltic Fleet is certain never to visit, and that harbour is Port Arthur.

When war broke out we can all recall Alexeieff's proud boast:—"The fortress of Port Arthur has been placed in a state of defence and is ready to serve Russia as an inaccessible stronghold." Upon that announcement we had to comment parenthetically that history knew many strongholds, but none that were inaccessible. What man can build man also can destroy. Nevertheless, the Viceroy had given the cue, and all Russia was convinced that the millions poured out upon the fortress would render it inaccessible to the enemy, impregnable by his arms, and a safe haven for the Russian fleet. We remarked upon these visions and promised to return to the subject at a later date.

Both before and during the siege we ventured to doubt whether the retention of Port Arthur was a Russian interest. No one, certainly, who appreciates the constant changes which take place in the applied sciences of the art of war, even during the course of a great campaign, will have any desire to hold to musty phrases for the mere sake of consistency, when proof has been afforded that fresh facts have come to light and that fresh evidence is available. If the principles of strategy are eternal and immutable, their application is altogether the reverse. The deep ruts of a Pompeian highway and the shimmering rails of a Trans-Siberian, for example, cause the conduct of military operations to undergo, from era to era, the profoundest change. The ordering of sieges and the shock of armies are equally modified in every conceivable manner by the constant progress in armament; while telegraphs, tele-

phones, wireless communications, steam, and balloons all exercise, in ever-increasing degree, an immense influence upon the scientific application of the art of war. All theories are useless unless they are in harmony with experience. We have to be ever on the alert to recognise changes, to adopt the good and reject the bad, embodying the former in our national system so that we may remain second to none.

But there appears to be no reason for altering in any way the opinions we have expressed concerning Port Arthur both before and during the siege. The whole course of the operations only confirms us more absolutely in our earlier beliefs. When the First Army of Japan landed in Korea and pressed forward to the Yalu it stood alone, and for many weeks was exposed to a counter-stroke on the part of Kuropatkin had he been in a condition to deliver one. This First Army was not strong, since the local conditions of the march through north-western Korea placed certain definite limits upon the numbers that could be employed; it was weaker, perhaps, than was generally acknowledged at the time, since there was good reason to exaggerate its numbers, and the assembly of the Grand Army which four months later drove the Russians from Liau-yang was a work of time.

Kuropatkin could not assail Kuroki because he had locked up 80,000 men in Port Arthur and many more at Vladivostok, leaving his field army too weak to crush the head of the invasion when it appeared. Grand invasions from over-sea are a very serious matter indeed. The assembly, transport, landing, and shaking together of the vast mass of men, guns, carriages, transport, horses, stores, supplies, ammunition, hospitals, etc., are perhaps the most difficult operation in the whole gamut of the art of war when resistance is anticipated. The greatest advantage possessed by defenders in the event of attack from over-sea is that of rapid concentration and immediate attack, before the invader has time to turn round or to be reinforced. Those 80,000 men of

Stössel's would have altered the complexion of affairs upon the Yalu, and still more would they have done so if the rest of the field army had been joined with them for an impetuous attack upon the First Army of Japan. An early success would have been big with consequences, and the entire plan of the Japanese would have been thrown out of gear by a Russian victory at the outset.

There was no such victory because dispersion was preferred to concentration, because 30,000 men were uselessly immured in one fortress and 15,000, subsequently increased to 30,000, in another, waiting with ordered arms until the Japanese brought up a Second or a Third Army and found it convenient to attack them. Until this moment came, Stössel at Port Arthur and Linievitch at Vladivostok were out of court; they might as well, or better, have been at Jericho, since they could not move, chained as they were by the leg, while the fortresses and garrisons were only an additional tax upon the cumbered railway. Neither Port Arthur nor Vladivostok stood athwart the main or compulsory lines of invasion of the enemy; their strategic influence upon the progress of the campaign was entirely dependent upon the attention which the Japanese cared to devote to the sieges, and the directing staff was not prepared to allow these sieges to interrupt or seriously delay the main operation of the campaign—namely, the crushing defeat of the Russian field army, which was always and necessarily the prelude to peace. Port Arthur and its garrison thus became a detachment, cut off deliberately and by order from their friends, and condemned inexorably to strategic death or capture, provided the Russian field army failed to gain important victories. The fate of Port Arthur was always dependent upon the defeats or victories of the Russian army in the main theatre. These victories in their turn were all the more improbable, especially at first, by reason of the reduction of strength entailed by the guard of Port Arthur.

To what strategic or other purpose, then, did Port Arthur respond? To the protection of the Pacific squadron in the first place, and to the purely vain-glorious affirmation of the inflexible purpose of Russia's historic mission in the next. As to this last purpose, it was nothing more than sheer obstinacy and a refusal to see the facts as they were. This question we discussed a month before Oku's army landed, and the conclusion was arrived at that the evacuation of Port Arthur was the lesser of two evils. We can only repeat now what was said then—namely, that, *quâ* moral results, the disaster was far greater to see all these men, ships, stores, and guns become the prize of the enemy than to see them removed or destroyed as part of a deliberate scheme of national strategy. The wound Russia feels to-day has been self-inflicted.

There remains, then, the protection of the pseudo-sea-going squadron of the Pacific. Port Arthur ruined the Pacific squadron and was the immediate cause of its ignominious overthrow. Lulled into a false sense of security by the frowning batteries along Golden Hill, the squadron anchored in the outer roadstead, under the shadow of its forts, never dreaming of attack, despite the knowledge Alexeieff certainly possessed that the Japanese Minister had broken off negotiations and left Russia. Even after the first surprise the malign attraction of Port Arthur's syren voice continued, day by day, week by week, and month by month, to seduce the Russian navy into the snare of its delusive shelter and to hold it fast locked in an insidious embrace, deadening and finally destroying all its vital powers. Never, surely, since Bazaine dallied to his ruin round Metz, has the fatal vice of the fortress or harbour of refuge been shown up in more glaring light.

The duty of the Russian fleet lay plain before it. Its duty was to steam out and attack the enemy, choosing its own time, but attacking *quand même*, with absolute disregard of the consequences to itself, and with the sole purpose of effecting the utmost possible

damage to the Japanese battleships which stood between Russia and the Empire of the Far East. In that duty the Russian navy failed, and failed miserably. We cannot say that it was unable to attack. It was unwilling, nothing more, since the subsequent and half-hearted sorties, succeeded by speedy flight back to the haven of rest, showed that the will and not the power to fight was absent. The inglorious end of a great sea-going squadron, manned by 15,000 of the best seamen of Russia, and representing in material alone a capital of thirty-two millions sterling, was due to the irresolution of the command, and this in its turn was caused by the fatal attraction of the harbour of refuge upon weak minds and undecided characters.

The Pacific squadron has been sunk, destroyed, and ruined without the loss of a single warship by Japan in battle during ten months of war. The Russian navy has disappeared without effecting anything at all from first to last. A scratch pack of ancient monitors might conceivably have done better. It is easy to say that it was not the use but the abuse of Port Arthur that brought about this calamity. Superficially the suggestion is correct, but it overlooks the human factor and the lessons of history which show that when a low-average leader has a hole to creep into in time of danger he proceeds to creep into it. Had any one of the five Russian admirals successively in command steamed out to sea with the firm determination to conquer or to die, he would have honourably served the national cause, and perhaps have permitted the ships from the Baltic to gain for Russia the command of the sea. There was no other course but this legitimately open to him, since the Russian Admiralty knew its own weakness in the West and the months that would elapse before the Baltic squadron could be ready to sail. But the syren harbour of refuge, as its custom is, and always will be, kept whispering of the soft solace of that fatal shelter, where fleet and garrison were necessarily and inevitably engulfed in a common catastrophe,

without any benefit to the general cause of a nature to compensate for the moral and material disaster deliberately incurred.

The abandonment of Port Arthur would have compelled the squadron to go out and fight. It has been proved that nothing else would have effected this object. The setting free of 30,000 men would have greatly strengthened Kuropatkin's field army and have allowed him to take the offensive. A fierce attack by the Russian squadron would most probably have effected such serious damage in Togo's fleet as to prepare the way for the Baltic ships and promise a great chance of final victory. The Pacific squadron was beyond all comparison better manned and officered than any other fleet Russia could send to sea. How could any other hope to succeed when the pick of the Russian navy had failed?

Commenting upon the aberration of mind of Russian strategists as long ago as March 9, we quoted from the *Kronstadtski Viestnik* some paragraphs which appeared to convey the Russian naval views of the situation of that time. "The passive attitude of our fleet," declared this naval organ, "has an immense importance, seeing that its presence covers the right wing and rear of our army, as well as the railway connection with Port Arthur. The despatch of the Russian fleet in search of the enemy would amount simply to leaving our coast line at the mercy of the Japanese." To that we made reply that it was difficult to sum up more concisely in a few phrases all that a navy was not intended to do, and that if this statement represented the prevailing feeling in Russian naval circles we need not expect to see the Pacific squadron recover from its earlier misfortunes. We remarked upon the profound and unfathomable depths which separated Russian and British ideas of maritime strategy and the uses of a war-fleet, and affirmed that the Russian theories belonged to the potamic epoch of naval war. Finally, we left contemporary history to prove or refute the thesis

of the Russian naval journal by the logic of accomplished facts. It is needless to point out how utterly these Russian theories now stand condemned by the history of the past.

That Port Arthur has contained before its walls a certain number of troops which might otherwise have been added to Oyama's armies is evident. That it has resisted, and still resists stoutly, and gives all that it is in a condition to give is also clear. But, to vary slightly a famous saying, *la plus grande forteresse au monde ne peut donner que ce qu'elle a*. Russia mistook the means for the ends of war and pays the penalty.

The idea that Port Arthur necessarily detained before its walls a larger number of Japanese than there were Russians within the fortress, and thereby allowed Kuropatkin the necessary time to secure success, cannot be allowed to stand as a correct reading of the situation. When once the investment was complete and the Japanese armies were landed, Marshal Oyama had the central situation. He could, if the situation upon the main theatre permitted, send down troops to the besiegers to take part in an attack. He could, in the event of a great battle in the main theatre, withdraw part of the besiegers to reinforce his army and then return them to Nogi after the fight. M. Gaston Dru declares that 25,000 men from before Port Arthur reached Oyama on October 14. Whether this was so or not is immaterial; whether Oyama might not have taken the same step at Liauyang history will say; the fact remains that this *chassé-croisé* was always possible, and there was a very fair chance that it would escape the enemy's observation.

The suggestion which has been made by Captain Mahan that the importance of Port Arthur lay in the fact that it obtained delay for Russia, would certainly have been a valid reason for the retention of the fortress had such delay enabled Russia to outstrip Japan in her capacity for subsequent assembly of force by sea or land. It had no such influence. The Baltic Fleet was

not ready, nor were there reasonable grounds for a belief that it could be made ready in time to profit, through aid to be rendered by the Pacific squadron, by a resistance to the bitter end at Port Arthur. As regards the armies, a high authority wrote in *The Times* of April 28 that "the water communications of Japan exceed by far in copiousness those of Russia by rail," and he described this fact as "definite superiority, initial and continuous," asserting, as indeed events have tended to demonstrate, that until this situation was reversed or modified, Russia's "inferiority must endure until Japan has sent forward her last reserves or exhausted her Treasury," a misfortune from which she is happily still far removed. In these circumstances the preponderating advantages of delay to Russia were not apparent, while the price paid for the pursuit of this chimera has certainly proved excessive. It may be freely allowed that had Nogi's army been present at Liauyang the Japanese victory might have been more decisive. So, also, would Kuropatkin's defence have been stronger if Stössel's 30,000 men had been in the field. The failure to gain the decisive success anticipated must be put down to other causes besides these. The result of Prince Khilkoff's splendid energy was not, we should judge, recognised at a sufficiently early date in Tokio; it was in the nature of a surprise. Moreover, the waste of strength in the frontal attack at Liauyang, and the consequent reduction in strength of Kuroki's force charged with the execution of the decisive movement, were tactical faults which rendered a Sedan unattainable.

Nor can we say that the higher direction of the attack upon Port Arthur, although displaying the extreme of valour, hardihood, and resolution, has been anything to accept as a model for this *genre d'exercice*. We had to warn the Japanese not to take the precedent of 1894 as a guide; we advised them to establish the mastery in artillery fire, and not to treat the fortress in such cavalier fashion as they did when it was held by

Chinese. Yet these friendly warnings passed unheeded ; the besiegers' artillery was inferior to its mission ; it was not until a very late stage in the attack that guns were sent which should have been provided at first. To the valour of the splendid infantry of Japan was confided the task of breaking their heads and their hearts against permanent fortifications with material obstacles uninjured and batteries unsubdued. It was too much to ask of gods or men. Yet we must all admit that the great and pathetic figure of General Nogi is beyond our criticism, since the general course of his operations was doubtless dictated from army headquarters, where the decision was probably made according to the best judgment of the situation at the moment. Those who have never made mistakes, it is truly said, have never made anything, and least of all have they made war.

Nevertheless, despite failures in execution, which are to this extent faults that history finds few merits except in success, the inherent defects of the Russian strategic conception were so great that no serious disadvantage accrued to Japan. As against the losses incurred in costly assaults by the Japanese, we have to place the losses of the Russian field armies in the futile endeavours to relieve Port Arthur—losses which have amounted to 200,000 men and have ended in total and absolute failure, while those of Japan have gained victories and have resulted in the entire destruction of a great squadron.

As the days wore on, and the armies on each side grew larger, Port Arthur assumed, so far as land forces were concerned, less and less importance. If 80,000 men might have turned the scale in the beginning, when the numbers available on each side were comparatively small, they became only a detachment when half a million men were at grips in the main theatre. When the heroism and devotion of the garrison were put to the supreme test it was a matter of comparatively minor importance, as regards the final results of the

war on land, whether they held out or surrendered. The field army was beaten again and again, and no heroism at Port Arthur made any material difference to the result from the moment that the three Japanese armies, adequate for victory though insufficient for annihilation, were all assembled, and were set in motion for the attack. As to the ships within the perimeter of the defences—the true quarry of the Japanese sleuth-hounds—their situation became precarious to a degree when the siege batteries began to throw shells upon their decks long before the main Russian forts were seriously attacked—that is to say, as far back as August 7 last. Like hares between the beaters and the guns, the ships fled hither and thither within the narrow shell-swept harbour, until at length they succumbed to the first well-placed shots or were sunk by their own crews as a preferable alternative. All that the garrison could do in these distressing circumstances, as we remarked at the time, was to show the world that the Russian are ideal troops for the defence of fortifications—a fact that we most of us knew before.

But if, locally considered, the retention of Port Arthur offered unbalanced disadvantage to the Russian cause by sea and land, did it profit the general strategy of the campaign or the reverse? Can any one doubt the answer? Port Arthur has been a far worse entanglement to the Russians than Ladysmith to the British in South Africa. There was no more strategic liberty for the Russian army. The entire campaign resolved itself into a costly, useless, and stupid effort to relieve a fortress deliberately isolated, and to undo in haste what had been wilfully done at leisure.

The retention of Port Arthur has caused the Russian army to break and spend itself in one frantic effort after another to attain the unattainable. It has caused, as we said it would cause, a total reversal of the original plan of campaign, which proposed a general retreat to the interior until such hour as Kuropatkin found himself strong enough to attack. That plan was

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not only the best, but, in the event of failure to overthrow the First Japanese Army after landing, the only plan worthy of the name.

But the fateful magnet was always there, and its pernicious influence continuously beguiled the Russian army from paths of prudence. The effect followed the cause as night follows day. Instead of withdrawing without useless shedding of blood, as the famous *communiqué* of February 18 announced, the army had its spirit crushed and its strength sapped in one foolish adventure after another from the Yalu and Telissu onwards; detachments were continually exposed and subjected to defeat in detail, and great battles with fearful losses were waged for the express purpose of relieving Port Arthur, until now, as the last stage of the siege approaches and the real object of the attack has been attained, the Russian field army has lost 200,000 killed, wounded, prisoners and sick, has temporarily broken as a weapon of war in Kuropatkin's hand, and has totally failed to carry out the mission entailed and imposed upon it by the useless retention of Port Arthur. The moth has kept on fluttering round the candle, and some people are surprised because it has burnt its wings.

The history of the campaign of 1904 in Manchuria is the history of wilful neglect of the first principles of strategy by sea and land; and if this neglect has been in a measure redeemed by the heroic defence of Stössel's splendid garrison, the fact has only caused the Russian army to suffer even more grievously than it otherwise would have suffered for the unpardonable fault of the original strategical sin.

The perception of the true *rôle* of fortresses, whether interior or maritime, is one of the most difficult problems in the art of war, and to strike the happy mean between neglect and abuse of fortification is by no means so simple as it appears. The art of war is not a bunch of formulas from which we can draw out one as we please; each case must be considered on its merits and

by the light of reason and sense. Before we devote a single shilling to fortifications we want to know precisely what the cost is expected to provide. For it is evident that hardly ever in history has a blockaded army extricated itself by its own unassisted efforts, and to bury an army, or still worse, a fleet, in a fortress for the mere pleasure of retarding its fall, is clearly an act of superlative folly.

A fortress spells immobility and dispersion ; we should therefore look askance at it until proof is given that it has a definite purpose to fulfil in a reasoned scheme of strategy. We must not allow ourselves to be led away by the glamour surrounding an heroic defence ; we must look to the end, and leave panegyrics to poets. We must, in short, regard all fortification as an auxiliary, and nothing more. A fortress, because it is a fortress and because it is ours, is not necessarily an advantage, and may be the reverse. If we gain battles we gain the enemy's fortresses ; if we lose them he gains ours, whether they are in the interior or upon the sea. In each case the larger the garrison the greater the disaster. Fortresses, and, in fact, all fortifications, have never played anything but a secondary rôle in the defence of states, and no nation has ever yet been saved by them. They can, as auxiliaries, occasionally assist an army, and they can aid naval capital, wisely invested and wisely used, to bear splendid interest ; but they can never re-establish moral superiority when once it is lost, nor create it, by the virtue attaching to its parapets, if it does not exist. Over the portals of the fortress or harbour of refuge should be written, in the largest and blackest of characters, the words that Dante discovered over the gates of Hell.

It is our army in India that this homily chiefly concerns. They may be truly thankful that Sir Henry Brackenbury once saved them from the incubus of a huge army death-trap at Rawal Pindi in the days when the engineer dominated the East ; and may they ever escape from noxious contact with such germs of

strategic death ! For an Imperial race, with the lion for its emblem, a sea-going navy and a mobile field army are everything, and the rest nothing. It is our field army, carried ever, as it must be, on our navy's back, that wins campaigns, decides victory, and compels peace. All the vast sums spent on superfluous accessories are more often than not expended at a pure loss. Let those who vaunt fortresses build them to their heart's content ; but let them emblazon the hedgehog in an attitude of defence upon their escutcheon, count themselves helots, and abandon for ever the dream of Imperial rule.

CHAPTER XXXVIII¹

THE FALL OF PORT ARTHUR

Ictibus innumeris adductaque funibus arbor Corruit!
Port Arthur has fallen ; the “most impregnable of all first-class fortresses” is level with the dust, and the Rising Sun once more floats upon its ruins !

Our first duty is to offer our warmest congratulations to our ally upon the heroic accomplishment of the task upon which he had set his heart, and the next and equally pleasing duty is to congratulate General Stössel and his brave garrison upon a great historic defence which honours the Russian army and the nation to which it belongs.

We cannot hope to receive for many a long day the detailed reports and plans describing and illustrating the operations of this great siege from hour to hour, but when at length they reach us they will certainly provide the text for innumerable and highly technical discourses for a great number of years to come. We must date the investment of Port Arthur from May 6, when the Kwantung promontory was first isolated from the rest of the world by the cutting of the railway by General Oku's army at Palantien. It was not, however, till May 16 that the Japanese closed upon the Kinchou isthmus, and not till May 26 that the Nanshan lines were carried and the road into the Kwantung promontory laid bare. Even then, time was required before the besieging army under General Nogi was ready to move

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of January 3 and 7, 1905.

forward to the attack, since the assembly of the field armies took precedence over that of the siege forces. A whole month passed before an advance upon the fortress was made, and only upon June 26 were the Japanese columns sent forward from Dalny.

General Stössel had meanwhile made the best of his opportunities. If the existence of the sea on three sides of the fortress gave the Japanese certain advantages, it also allowed of a step-by-step defence of the successive positions on the peninsula without serious risk to the safety of the large garrison, numbering 30,000 of the land army alone, that had been allotted to Stössel for the defence. Of these advantages he was not slow to avail himself.

The attack and defence of the outlying positions occupied the Japanese for a whole month, and it was not until nearly the end of July that the fortifications in the immediate vicinity of the main line of forts were assailed. The close attack began about July 26 and temporarily ceased after the severe repulse of the assaulting column in August, when it was at length recognised that the final stages of the siege could not be *brusqué*, and Nogi and his men sat down to reduce the place by means of the slower arts of the engineer, bringing up those heavy guns which ought to have been provided earlier in the day. Gradually, and little by little, the works were driven up to the main line of forts, the attack culminating in mine warfare, and day by day the Japanese siege artillery, constantly reinforced and supplemented by 11-in. guns, began to establish superiority of fire over the powerful and well-concealed batteries in the Russian forts, ranging over the harbour, town, dock, and workshops, and driving the defenders underground. We may say that the simple investment lasted from May 6 to June 26, a period of 51 days ; the distant attack and defence from June 26 to July 26, a period of 30 days ; and the close attack, or siege proper, from July 26 to January 1, or 159 days, making a total for all the operations which centred upon the fortress of 240 days.

We are a long way removed from the days of Troy and Syracuse, when fortresses held out for years, and it may be said generally that the means of attack, in these days of long-ranging artillery of large calibre, have outgrown and surpassed even the most elaborate devices of permanent fortifications of the most approved type, organised and defended by the stoutest of garrisons. At the cost of 55,000 killed and wounded, the Japanese have disposed of over 50,000 Russians, have captured town, fortress, and arsenal, and, finally, have achieved the overwhelming ruin of the Pacific squadron, which has ceased to exist.

The turning point of the siege operations was undoubtedly the capture of 203-Mètre Hill on November 30. Until that dominating point fell into Japanese hands the besiegers were unable to make sure of the effect of much of their fire against the warships sheltering under Peiyushan. Directly the hill was taken a post of observation was installed on the summit, and by means of indications sent by the observing officers at this spot the naval brigade directed their fire with fatal effect upon the warships, and subsequently upon the inner defences when the ruin of the ships was assured. The attack on the Erhlung and Keekwan forts suffered from the absence of any close position for the besiegers' batteries in this quarter, and the eventual capture of these vital points by the Japanese infantry and engineers must be reckoned as one of the finest feats of the whole war. Once these positions and 203-Mètre Hill were in Japanese hands the game was up, since it was only a matter of time for the Japanese to pass up their heavy guns and establish them in the conquered forts or upon adjacent sites.

Stössel's letter to General Nogi, dated December 31, declared that further resistance was useless considering the conditions within the fortress. In his despatch of December 28 to his own government he said that "the position of the fortress is becoming very painful. Our principal enemies are scurvy, which is mowing down

the men, and 11-in. shells, which know no obstacle and against which there is no protection. 'There only remain a few persons who have not been attacked by scurvy.'

In a further despatch of December 29, he added : " We will only hold out a few days longer. We have hardly any ammunition left. I have now 10,000 men under arms. They are all ill."

Telegraphing on January 1, he said : " Great Sovereign ! Forgive ! We have done all that was humanly possible. Judge us, but be merciful. Eleven months of ceaseless fighting have exhausted our strength. A quarter only of the defenders, and one-half of them invalids, occupy 27 versts of fortifications without support and without intervals for even the briefest repose. The men are reduced to shadows."

In a telegram from Stössel published on January 28, the figures for the land forces which surrendered are given at 8,000 on the positions, 4,000 from hospital " who wished to be dealt with," 1,300 medical staff and non-combatants, 3,500 frontier guards, sappers, and gunners, and 13,135 in hospital, or a total of 25,935 exclusive of the navy.

General Nogi's report, sent on from Tokio January 8, gives the total number of prisoners at 878 officers and 23,491 men. The official list of material captured at Port Arthur included 59 permanent forts, 546 guns, including 54 large and 149 medium calibre, 82,670 rounds of gun ammunition, 60 torpedoes, 30,000 kilogrammes of powder, 35,252 rifles, 2½ million rounds of small-arm ammunition, 290 ammunition waggons, 606 transport waggons, 2,096 sets of cart harness, 1,920 horses, 4 battleships (including the *Sevastopol*, which is entirely under water), 2 cruisers, 14 gunboats and torpedo craft, 10 steamers, 8 steam launches and 12 various, besides 35 steam launches that can be repaired.

Stössel, so far as we can appreciate the position without official details of the siege, surrendered a few weeks before the absolute necessity for the step had arisen, but his brave garrison had done all that the most

exacting code of military honour could demand, and all that human energy and devotion could accomplish. It is with a feeling of relief that the world receives the news that it is to be spared the dreaded report of the annihilation of the much-enduring remnant of the Russian troops after a general and final assault. It may be that Kondratenko, Smirnoff, Fock, and others deserve a large share of the credit for a fine resistance; it may be also that harmony did not reign undisturbed in the higher circles of the command. A siege of this character is almost the greatest trial to which human nature can be exposed, and it is not given to every one to possess the iron nerve capable of withstanding the strain day after day without flinching. But honour to whom honour is due. Stössel, whatever his personal virtues or failings may have been, represents the Russian nation at Port Arthur, and to him belongs the credit for a right gallant and soldierly resistance which will live when the memory of much that is less noble has passed away. The splendid defence of Port Arthur sheds a ray of glory upon the Tsar's standards, and redeems them from the stain of their earlier defeats.

It is small wonder, indeed, that Tokio makes holiday to-day, for the Japanese army, under General Nogi, one of the finest figures that the war has produced, has surpassed itself in the moving events of the great siege. We expect many things from the East, but tenacity perhaps least of all, and it is precisely in tenacity that Japan has excelled. Neither her generals nor her troops have been discouraged by failure, and the records of the successive assaults upon the strongest works that the art of the engineer has yet devised place the crown on the arch of the triumphs of our brave allies.

Whatever views we may entertain as to the *rôle* which Port Arthur has played in this great campaign, there can be but one opinion upon the conduct of the operations by besiegers and besieged. The combatants have been worthy of each other, and it may be that the mutual respect and esteem which often arise between

chivalrous combatants after hard blows given and received will in this case lay the foundation of an even kindlier feeling when the bitterness of defeat has passed away.

Russia has little to show for the heroism of her sons at Port Arthur. Had she been able to admit the possibility of eventual defeat in the war, she might, perhaps, have taken advantage of the stout defence of her Pacific fortress to secure favourable terms of peace. The hour is now past, and upon Kuropatkin devolves the task of meeting, if he can, the formidable shock of the Japanese armies when the icy grasp of winter is relaxed and Oyama's columns are once more arrayed for battle and move forward to the attack.

The fall of Port Arthur and the dawn of a new year make it a suitable moment to review the general situation at the front, and to notice the changes that have taken or are taking place consequent upon the reversion of the whole of the Liautung Peninsula to Japan.

It is stated that the capture of the great Pacific fortress will be followed by the transfer of the larger part of the besieging army to Liauyang, and that only a small body of men will be left as a garrison at Port Arthur. This seems a natural proceeding, and we must consequently allow that General Nogi's three divisions will soon become available on the Shaho, either as a general reserve, or, as Colonel Gädke seems to suggest, to prolong the right of the Japanese line, which will then be stronger by some 50,000 additional troops of tried value.

But this reinforcement, valuable as it is, will not in itself be sufficient to afford that annihilating numerical superiority which the Japanese must now desire to provide in order to deal a crushing blow when the season allows a forward movement. We have constantly referred to the necessity which has confronted the Tokio War Office, for the last four months past, to enlarge their views of the requirements of the situation in view of the great achievements of Prince Khilkoff's depart-

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ment upon the Russian line of communications, and there is every reason to believe that this has been done.

In order to obtain peace, ordinary battles, followed by ordinary victories and ordinary results, will only lead to a useless prolongation of the struggle. Numbers only can annihilate, and the result of the great battles of Liauyang and the Shaho must long ago have impressed this maxim in a very forcible manner upon the Emperor of Japan and his great council of the Elder Statesmen.

It will be recalled that, as a reply to the creation of Gripenberg's Second Army, the Japanese made a change in their recruiting laws. Instead of passing three, nine, and eight years respectively in the active, reserve, and militia categories, men were ordered to form part of these several divisions of the army for three, fourteen, and three years. The total period of liability was not increased; but five classes of men were transferred from the militia, which is not sent abroad, to the reserve, which rests under this liability. The *Militär Wochenblatt* declares that an addition of 250,000 men was expected from the reintegration of these five classes in the reserve, but that only 94,000 men were obtained. This conclusion assumes that the Japanese War Office did not know the numbers of trained men which they possessed—a suggestion which is inherently absurd, and we shall certainly stand by the conclusions of the well-informed *Times* correspondent at Tokio, who has given a far higher figure.

But, whatever the exact number may be, the resources of the population of Japan have not as yet been seriously drawn upon, heavy though the losses at the front have been. The organ of the German Staff allows that there are still 170,000 reservists and 190,000 men of the newest class of recruits available, and that, including all sources, the grand total amounts to 849,000 men; it thinks, however, that there is a great want of instructors, and that it is therefore materially impossible to raise the strength of the field army higher than

350,000. But from all this the *Wochenblatt* argues that the peace effectives of an army must be large, and must be proportionate to the increase of population—a conclusion which reminds us that there are certain laws before the Reichstag which may be more intended to benefit by the argument adduced than the general public. We should rather feel inclined to say that the numbers of a national army must be proportionate to the hardest task it may reasonably be expected to confront in time of war, and that the proportion between the effectives of an army and the numbers of a population have no necessary connection with this task.

However this may be, there is no doubt that, apart from the steady despatch of trained men to maintain the units at the front at their full war strengths—a procedure which the Japanese have adhered to throughout—there has been a great levy of younger recruits in Japan. All the barracks and dépôts are crowded with men, and there is no reason to doubt the statement that the field army is in progress of expansion to half a million of men, in order to compete on level terms with the similar deployment which Russia proposes and hopes to display in the spring. It may be, indeed, that the Japanese numbers will be larger, for there can be no doubt that for months past no possible miscalculation can have been made, and that the preparations for the forthcoming struggle have been and are being developed on a scale worthy of the occasion and the cause.

While Tokio is now within six days of Liauyang by easy and well-ordered stages, the eye of the Trans-Siberian needle is proving once more refractory to the struggles of the Russian camel. Despite all the energy and efforts of the wizard Khilkoff, the great forces of time, distance, and nature remain as ever the firm allies of Japan. In a ukase of November 2 last it is stated, on the authority of the Russian Director of Military Communications, that, thanks to the efforts of Khilkoff's assistants, the concentration of the First Army of Manchuria had been completed about six weeks earlier

than had been anticipated. In other words, some 40,000 more men were placed at the front for the period of the great battles during September and October last than were counted on in the initial schemes of troop transport. It is not impossible that this result came as a surprise to the Japanese, since there is such a thing in the art of military information as too much knowledge, and, if the general plan of transport eastward was known in Tokio, a deviation from the plan to Russian advantage may possibly not have been foreseen.

But there are various signs and portents that the increased traffic on the railway during August and September last has not been maintained under winter conditions. The 8th Army Corps from the west began to entrain on October 8; but it was not until December 10 that the last combatant unit of this army corps reached Mukden, and it is believed that, even on the date last named, many sections of the baggage, medical, and general trains of Miloff's corps were still held up on the Cis-Baikal portion of the Siberian Railway. In rear of the 8th Corps there are following the 1st and 2nd Brigades of Rifles, which, together with the 5th Brigade, were passed in review by the Tsar on November 9 and 10 of last year. These rifle brigades consist of four regiments each of two battalions, and have with them three eight-gun batteries; for the purpose of numerical calculation they can each be taken at 10,000 combatants and 24 guns. As previously suggested, these brigades will be interpolated in the railway traffic as opportunity offers; at present it would appear that only the 1st and 2nd have been entrained.

Following after these units the 16th Army Corps is now in course of transport, and although January 10 has been named as the probable date of arrival of this corps at Mukden, it is extremely doubtful whether the anticipation will be realised in view of the fact that the transport of the 8th Corps has occupied sixty-eight days for the combatant branches alone. Behind the 16th Corps there will follow the 4th Army Corps, which

is already mobilised, and the residue of the five rifle brigades. There are also under orders or in course of transport various units of less importance—namely, a second Caucasian mounted brigade made up of Terek and Kuban Cossacks, similar in organisation to Orbeliani's brigade already in Manchuria, but composed of true Cossacks, and not of Georgian and other heterogeneous elements, a third battalion for the Regiment of Siege Artillery of Eastern Siberia, the 40th Brigade of Artillery with forty-eight guns, besides one regular and one reserve railway battalion and two additional battalions of fortress artillery from Odessa and Kronstadt for service at Vladivostok.

There are two other army corps which have also been named as intended to form part of the reorganised armies of Manchuria—namely, the 21st and 13th—but for the present they can be disregarded, since the railway is already promised more troops than it can handle before the reopening of hostilities. It would appear that Kuropatkin has been reinforced by 55,000 fresh troops since the close of the Shaho battle, and by a number of drafts to make good losses, the numbers of which cannot be exactly determined, but are probably not considerable, since the railway has been fully occupied. The most trustworthy estimates place the numbers of the Russian army at this moment between 230,000 and 250,000 combatants, and there is no need to pay any regard to the fictions of 500,000, 600,000, and even 800,000 men which are once more scattered abroad in the press of Europe, and even echoed in America on the authority of that militant diplomatist Count Cassini. That there are over 400,000 Russian troops in Manchuria is possible, but many of these are in scattered garrisons, others protect the railway. Vladivostok detains a heavy detachment, while the newly-formed dépôts for troops at the front engulf and absorb a large number of men.

The mobilisation which took place in Western Russia recently is said to have provided about 258,000

men, of whom 137,000 are required to fill up the gaps in the corps at the front, while the residue constitute the fresh units already named. Even if we are generous and grant that 35,000 reinforcements a month can be sent east over the railway, it seems likely that the 258,000 will not arrive at the front before the end of July next, when, no doubt, if all questions of supply are overcome and the Japanese remain quiescent, the anticipated 500,000 men will be assembled. But that is much to expect; not only will the war recommence with its customary severity so soon as the climate permits, but the waste will also go on as before, and the supply question grows more and more difficult as the country becomes more exhausted and the numbers increase.

It is, moreover, unlikely that 35,000 men a month will be delivered at the front during the winter, since the line is showing signs of deterioration in some places, and the necessity for heating every carriage throughout the journey creates an additional embarrassment. The closing of the river lines of transport, which were of considerable utility for the carriage of wounded during the summer, throws a fresh strain upon the line, while every day, as the numbers increase, the demands upon the railway multiply proportionately. Anxiety is steadily growing in St. Petersburg on this vital question; and the situation is beginning to turn once more, and, temporarily, at all events, somewhat to the disadvantage of Russia. It is difficult to believe that any very considerable increase of traffic can be obtained by further improvements in the line other than by means of improved rolling stock and more powerful locomotives. Heavier rails have been laid over many important sections, but the ideas of doubling the line or of building a second railway are all met by the objection that they will be very costly and cannot be completed in time to affect the issue of this campaign. The present idea appears to be to prolong the Perm-Tumen railway until it joins the Trans-Siberian at some point further

east, and to double the line in certain places ; but no firm decision appears as yet to have been taken, nor will such decision materially affect the issue of the war.

Concerning the situation on the Shaho at this moment, the armies are in such close proximity that events are at the mercy of an incident or a stroke initiated by a subordinate. But just as, two months ago, there were certain circumstances which led us to believe that neither side would advance for some time to come, so now there are certain other circumstances which are worth consideration.

In order to move at this season of the year an army must be able to find food, water, forage, and fuel, and it must be housed. The supply of water presents obvious difficulties at this season, forage there is none save what the army carries with it, and all accounts show that fuel is only obtained in small quantities and with difficulty even while the armies remain halted. If the country and the roads present fewer difficulties for the movement of carriages at this season than at any other, it is not possible for a sustained advance to be undertaken without such serious losses of men and animals by exposure as would be almost as bad as a defeat. Nothing is impossible in war, but many things are not expedient ; and though no one would care to foretell a Russian resolve, which is usually formed irrespective of circumstances, it would certainly be a very foolish act to initiate an advance without weighing all the circumstances and without being able to prosecute a movement once begun. Operations at the present date, we should judge, can only be usefully undertaken by small bodies of troops with special equipment, in so far as continuous movements are concerned. More important affairs must be limited rather to hours than to days, since the losses by exposure for a longer period would tend to ruin the army incurring them. Kuropatkin, indeed, in a recent missive to a department at St. Petersburg, speaks of the losses he expects to incur by cold and exposure when he advances. The offensive

is still, evidently, in his mind, but unless he is beguiled into an attack before Nogi's troops reach Oyama, there is no special fascination for him in movement before his reinforcements appear and his three armies are regularly constituted. We should certainly believe that he is at present in no condition to take the field with success, nor can we name a date when this situation is likely to be changed.

If we must all admire the pluck and gallantry of an army that does not know when it is beaten, it would also be agreeable if we could see some glimmering of an understanding of the situation in the circles of the Russian Government and in those of the higher command. But at present there is none, and consequently nothing remains but to continue the war until victory inclines to the Tsar's standards as Russia anticipates, or until honourable defeat is turned into irreparable disaster, as an increasing body of opinion in the rest of the world expects. Even Germany shows symptoms of returning sense and endeavours to align her military views with British and American opinion, now that the constant and reiterated assurances of Russian victory emanating from Berlin have been so persistently falsified by events. We are even told that the German Emperor solemnly warned the Tsar of his danger ten days before war broke out, and in the *coulisses* of diplomacy the exact words of the Imperial warning are narrated. The story has probably been imagined *après coup* to restore the shattered prestige of German military foresight, but in the contrary event his Imperial Majesty is certainly to be congratulated upon his prescience, and it is only to be regretted, for the sake of Russia, that this remarkable warning was not allowed to see the light, and that, on the contrary, very different views found expression in the organ of the General Staff and in the columns of the officially inspired press, serving to encourage the Russians to persevere in the fatal course of action which has led them to the calamities of the present hour.

CHAPTER XXXIX¹

THE SITUATION IN JANUARY, 1905

THE order of the day which the Emperor of Russia addressed to his army and navy on January 14 is a dignified acknowledgment of failure, and a clear expression of the Imperial intention to continue the contest by land and sea.

“Port Arthur,” declares his Imperial Majesty, “has fallen into the hands of the enemy. The struggle for its defence lasted eleven months, and for over seven months the glorious garrison was cut off from the outside world. Deprived of help and without murmuring, the garrison endured the privations of the siege and moral tortures, while the enemy continued to gain successes. Unsparing of life and blood, a handful of Russians sustained the enemy’s furious onslaughts in the firm hope of relief. With pride Russia witnessed their deeds of heroism, and the whole world bowed before their heroic spirit. The resources gave out, while the onset of fresh hostile forces was constant; and the garrison, its deed of heroism accomplished, had to yield to superior numbers. Peace to the ashes of the dead, and eternal memory to the never-to-be-forgotten Russians who perished in the defence of Port Arthur! Far away from Russia you died for Russia’s cause, filled with love for the Emperor and the Fatherland. Glory be to you the living! May God heal your wounds, and give you the strength and patience to bear your sore trials!”

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of January 7, 8, 9, 12, 18, 21 and 24, 1905.

"Our enemy is bold and strong, and the struggle with him at a distance of 10,000 versts from the sources of our strength is indescribably hard. But Russia is powerful. In the thousand years of her life there have been still harder trials, still more threatening dangers. Every time she emerged stronger and with fresh power from the struggle. Our failures have been severe. While we lament our losses, we will not allow ourselves to be led into distraction. With all Russia, I trust that the hour of victory will soon dawn, and pray to God that He may bless my dear troops and fleets, in order that, united, they may overthrow the enemy and uphold the honour and glory of Russia."

The most striking point of this order of the day is the resolution it expresses—not, indeed, with confidence, but rather with resignation—to continue the war. The Imperial Government separates itself in this decision from the aspirations of the civilised world, and from the almost universally expressed desires of the Russian people, who are unable to perceive, now that their eyes are partly opened, that anything is to be gained by a prolongation of the war, save the exhaustion of Russian resources, without compensating profit. But the pill is still too bitter for the Russian Government to swallow, and between the two courses of peace or continuance of the war the Tsar elects that which requires least effort and least exercise of will, and is in apparent accord with the sentiments and desires of those high dignitaries of the Court and Church who believe that their own personal and vital interests are indissolubly bound up with the success of autocracy in its warlike adventure. It might, indeed, have been assumed that the Tsar would, in the last resort, bend before the desires of his intimates, and that he would rather adopt the line of least resistance and deluge afresh the plains of Manchuria in blood than have the courage and independence necessary to face the situation at home and abroad, and restore peace to the suffering millions of his people.

The House of Romanoff, in the persons of the

Grand Dukes, has steadily evaded the call of duty during the war. These titled magnates, adorned with resplendent uniforms ablaze with decorations won on the soft carpets of St. Petersburg, have incurred—doubtless without their knowledge—the derision of soldiers of all the armies of the world. There was once a great man of whom it was truly said that he was first in peace, first in war, and first in the hearts of his fellow-countrymen; nor has there ever been fought a great war up to the present time in which the Princes of the reigning houses, and many of the leading figures in great democracies, have not been the first at the post of danger. The House of Romanoff, all save two young cadets who paid a flying visit to Manchuria and speedily returned, have not led their people in this war, and by their abstention have forfeited all claim to consideration as soldiers. While seven Princes of the Imperial House of Japan have shared the dangers and hardships of the war by land and sea, the much larger number of Grand Dukes have stayed in their palaces, and have only distinguished themselves by the zeal they have shown to despatch ikon-laden peasants to fight their battles, and by the precipitate manner in which they have hastened to ruin the reputations of those who have borne the burden and heat of the day. Aristocracy, forsooth! May the fates save us from such decadents! It will be an ill day for the peace of the world if the miserable example of the House of Romanoff finds imitators among those who stand as the leaders of the people.

The demands for peace which have issued from such quarters as Washington and Berne have met with the fate that might have been anticipated. They are taken as evidence that Japan is weakening, and that her friends desire to save her from her impending doom. As that was the narrow view to take of the sentiment of the world, it became a mathematical certainty that it would represent the settled conviction of the Russian censor. There is, unfortunately, nothing to be gained by such

well-intentioned efforts, and the heart of Pharaoh is not likely to be softened save by a further instalment of those plagues which have visibly shaken the Imperial confidence and must still be trusted to destroy it.

The *Novoe Vremya*, with its customary simplicity, seeks in German organs for the usual assurance of impending Russian victory, and has no difficulty whatever in discovering it. Here is the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, for example, which is positive as ever that Russia will win; and the *Novoe Vremya* lays delighted stress on the statement of the German organ that "the whole course of the military operations up to the present time is such as does not admit of any doubt with regard to Russia's final successful issue from the war." It is owing to incitements of this perfidious character that Russia continues to remain blind to the realities of the situation.

The Russian naval squadrons which have been engaged during the past two months in circum-navigating Africa effected their concentration during the first days of the New Year in the waters round the northern extremity of Madagascar. It was apparently intended that Rozhdestvensky's division, which had doubled the Cape of Good Hope, should steam up the Mozambique Channel and rejoin Fölkersham's ships between the Comoro Islands and the north of Madagascar. The bad weather experienced after rounding the Cape appears to have caused a change of plan. Rozhdestvensky turned east, and passing Cape Ste. Marie, the most southerly point of Madagascar, reached Antongil Bay, which offers good protection at this season of the year. Fölkersham arrived at Passandava Bay in the north-west of the island on January 8, and both divisions appear to have detached numerous vessels to Nossi-Bé, Majunga, and Tamatave in order to obtain supplies and provisions. In addition to these main divisions of the fleet, belated detachments are still in Cretan and Egyptian ports, where they are apparently

delayed pending a final decision as to the future course of operations.

The exact condition of the Russian ships is not known, and, although rumour has it that one or two cruisers and several colliers are in a bad way there is no definite information of any serious mishap. The German naval Captain von Pustau has, however, given a very unfavourable estimate of the fleet and of its chances of success, and as this officer was one of the last independent witnesses to visit the ships at Libau and to see the admiral in command, his evidence is of value. Some of the Russians on board appear to regard it almost as a national affront that the north-east monsoon should cause them to make such bad weather at this season. It may be, however, that the young officers of the Grodno Hussars who were shipped at St. Petersburg are responsible for these reflections upon the deplorable antagonism of the elements.

The Baltic Fleet left Libau at 1 a.m. on October 16 of last year, and has consequently already taken eighty days on its journey. The Russians have already taken as long to traverse little more than half the distance which separated them from their objective as they were originally calculated to take for the whole voyage, and at the present rate of progress they will not reach Vladivostok before the middle of March. The *Novoe Vremya* has informed us that the fleet burns 3,140 tons of coal daily at reduced speed and 433 tons daily while at anchor, and that, on an average, three days in eight are spent in coaling at anchor. If this is correct, about 170,000 tons will have been consumed since the voyage began, a fact which gives some idea of the character of the preparation required for operations of this magnitude. It may be recalled that during the three months ended on November 30 last some 50 colliers left Cardiff, Barry, and Newport for various points on the way to the Far East for the service of the Baltic Fleet, carrying not less than 250,000 to 300,000 tons. These colliers will, however, themselves have consumed a considerable quantity,

and, large as these figures are, it is not yet certain whether sufficient allowance has been made for the great delays which have occurred in the progress of the armada since the plan of the cruise was first made and the contracts were placed.

Meanwhile the Japanese are taking the most energetic measures to meet the threatened danger. Their combined squadron is now in Japanese ports with the prospect of at least three months' rest before the contest is renewed, during which period we can be sure that not one moment will be wasted in getting the ships and crews into prime condition. At the same time a detachment of the fleet, strength unknown, has been wisely despatched to the south in order to note and report the progress of the enemy and to compel the Russians to keep together, colliers and all, or to risk being cut off in detail. A network of naval intelligence has been spread over all the territories in the Malay Archipelago, and if the Russians proceed they are nearly certain to be observed and reported, since there is a very considerable number of Japanese auxiliary and other cruisers on the watch for them.

It is only natural that French and Dutch statesmen should regard the situation with some anxiety. So far as the French are concerned, they are placed in a difficult position, but it is one that might have been foreseen and could have been avoided. The Dutch have hitherto taken no share in harbouring the belligerent fleets, and we can feel reasonably assured that the great prudence that invariably distinguishes Dutch statesmen in foreign affairs will not permit any infraction of neutral rights or duties in the ports of their East Indian possessions. Just as, in the West, the neutrality of Belgium and the independence and integrity of both Belgium and the Netherlands are in the front rank of British interests, so in the East the preservation of Dutch possessions from alien interference is a matter which concerns us closely, and it is opposed to our interest that anything should take place calculated to disturb the existing situation.

It is, however, still an open question whether the Russian fleet will proceed upon its quest, remain where it is, or return. The Tsar returned to St. Petersburg on the morning of January 5, and both that afternoon and the following day held a council to discuss the situation. It is small wonder that no decision was arrived at, for each one of the three courses presents obvious disadvantages. Is it better to proceed and to stand the fire of the Japanese, or to return and incur the almost more galling fusillade of European ridicule? Is it possible to find a golden mean, and for the fleet to remain, like Mahomet's coffin, poised between earth and heaven?

If the Russian Admiralty decide according to the tables of co-efficients which had such disastrous influence upon the resolution of poor Vithöft on June 28, they will probably regard a contest as hopeless, especially if they are clear that a junction with anything from Vladivostok that can float is impracticable. On the other hand, Klado's campaign, and the promised despatch of another squadron from the Baltic on January 28, may induce the Tsar to persevere, for it is not a small thing to be asked to recall the armada which has been fitted out at such cost after months of effort, and to leave the supremacy of the sea to the Japanese without appeal.

To judge from the latest information, it would appear that Admiral Rozhdestvensky has been directed to model his behaviour upon that of Mahomet's coffin. He may not come back to the disturbed land of Russia, neither may he seek, in Japanese waters, that passport to heaven which he might reasonably anticipate after a meeting with the Mikado's navy. He must remain suspended in mid-ocean, wherever he can or wherever he likes, so long as he does not seek salvation in the secluded haven of Diego Suarez, under the cover of French batteries, to the great danger and inconvenience of his present hosts.

These orders, however, are not remarkable for lucidity

or precision. We know, very much to our loss, that the cruise of a hostile squadron in these distant waters was practicable enough in the old days, when sailing ships were able to keep the seas for months at a time, provided that fresh water and provisions were occasionally to be procured. But modern war-fleets, and especially such a fortuitous assemblage of atoms as the Russian fleet, have a much shorter tether. They cannot vanish into space, and must be provided with coal and many other primary necessities for the continuance of their activity. A base of some kind is indispensable. The pinions of warships are less broad and less strong than in the old days, and the oceanic flight of naval squadrons has become heavy and laboured. The albatross has given place to the cormorant. Sail alone allowed systematised cruiser warfare against commerce in the past, and the incursion of battle squadrons into distant seas; everything that has occurred during the present war underlines the almost insuperable difficulty that besets a modern squadron endeavouring to undertake a voyage half round the world, when deprived of the aid of national coaling stations. The benevolent neutrality of France and the organised activity of German colliers have hitherto sped the parting guest upon his way, but the subsequent proceedings of the armada will be beset with greater difficulties.

If orders are given to proceed we shall undoubtedly witness one of the most deeply interesting dramas that has occurred in any maritime war of our time; but we must also remember that this fleet is the last naval hope of Russia, and that if it is destroyed, as it probably will be for all practical purposes, whether it wins or loses, Russia sinks to a naval rank which practically wipes her off the list of naval Powers for many years to come. Captain Klado may mock at the "ulterior objects" of Russian diplomacy, and, from a military point of view, he has every right on his side. At the same time we can quite understand that it is a serious matter for the Russian Government to face the result of a fresh naval

defeat, and we cannot wonder that there is hesitation where success is so little assured.

No one, in this country certainly, is likely to miss the lessons of sea power which have been once more taught us by the great events of the war. They meet us at every turn, and we could not escape from them if we would. Sea supremacy is the beginning and middle and end of the whole war, and there is surely not a nation nor a government in the world that has not realised the situation to the full. Let us only recall that in 1894 three Great Powers with mighty armies amounting to some ten millions or more of armed men objected to the presence of Japan in Liautung, and courteously but firmly requested her to leave. She left—and has returned, and the reason why the protest of 1894 is not renewed is in the general knowledge of the world.

The preparations made in Japan to give the Baltic Fleet a warm and hearty reception have not distracted the naval staff at Tokio from their secondary objective—namely, the watch upon Vladivostok. Hitherto this watch has been ineffective, and some twenty-five steamships, at least, have recently slipped into that port unharmed. The recent capture of the British steamers *Lethington* and *Roseley* bodes ill for the fifty or sixty steamers, mostly British, and insured at Lloyd's at premiums of 25 to 35 guineas per cent., which are bound for the same port; and it is not surprising that rates for re-insurance have risen to 50 guineas, nor that they should rise still higher. "Underwriter" declares, in a letter to *The Times*, that the deepest sympathy will be felt for the "unfortunate owner"; and he expects that something of the same feeling may be extended to the underwriters at Lloyd's, who appear destined to suffer a loss of £140,000, if the Courts of Japan declare these ships good prize. He is sanguine. If owners, for the sake of lucre, assist the cause of the enemy of our ally, and if underwriters, for the same object, finance them, they have no right to complain of the losses that

fall upon them. They should consider that, for every 10,000 tons of cargo delivered at Vladivostok, fifty more military trains full of troops are placed at the disposal of the Russian staff for despatch to the Army of Manchuria, and that all this implies longer continuance of the war and greater loss to Japan. Far from sympathising with owners and underwriters, most people will think that these losses serve them right; and the writer, certainly, will venture to express his opinion that a premium of 50 guineas, in itself almost prohibitive, still fails to express, in terms of commerce, the military risk incurred in the continuance of this discreditable trade.

Meanwhile the situation in Manchuria has been enlivened by a *lever de rideau* before the war drama of 1905. On January 1 two enterprising Russian subalterns raided the Japanese railway ten miles north of Haicheng, and effected certain unimportant damage. The success of this raid doubtless encouraged Kuropatkin to authorise a more considerable operation; and on January 8, Mishchenko's division of Cossacks, Caucasians, and Dragoons, in three brigades, crossed the Hun and marched south on a five-mile front. The strength of this division has not been determined, but it seems probable that it numbered at least 6,000 mounted men with six batteries of light artillery. With this column there went the correspondent of the *New York Herald*, to whom we are indebted for the best account of the raid yet received.

It is possible that Mishchenko did not cross the Liau during his march to the south, but he apparently did so during his retreat. His force spent the night of January 8 between the Hun and the Liau, struck the confluence of these rivers the following night, and on January 10 overcame the brave resistance of a band of 500 Hunhutzers, of whom 100 were killed. By this time the Japanese must have been thoroughly aroused by bonfires prepared in advance to give warning. Mishchenko's left and centre brigades met with an

energetic resistance from 300 Japanese infantry at a village covering the railway; but on January 11 the Caucasian mounted brigade destroyed 500 mètres of the line north of Haicheng, and the dragoons are alleged to have blown up a bridge or culvert near Tashihchiaio. The Japanese reports admit that some damage was done, but tell us that the line was promptly repaired. It seems probable that the Russian centre brigade attacked Old Niuchwang on the afternoon of January 12, and after gaining some temporary success, was driven back. Mishchenko himself, accompanied probably by his right brigade, swept on to his main objective—Niuchiatung—where there was known to be a large commissariat store with a weak garrison, and this place was assailed on the afternoon of January 12. But two days, at least, had now elapsed since the first warning of the raid had been received. Troops were hurried down by rail over the restored line, and after incurring some loss in his attack, Mishchenko drew off with nothing done. General Oku despatched a force to intercept the retreat, and it would appear that the Russians were compelled to cross the Liau in order to break clear. Whether or not they succeeded in withdrawing without interruption is not definitely ascertained, but we must assume that Kuropatkin sent out a supporting column to bring home the raiders in safety.

The raid was bold, but, in view of the proximity of the main Japanese armies, the shortness of the line of communications assailed, and the large accumulation of Japanese troops in the neighbourhood, success was far from assured. All depended upon rapid execution by columns travelling fast and light, and it is very doubtful, if Mishchenko had six batteries with him, and a lot of transport, whether this addition to his force was of advantage. From his starting point to Yingkow the distance was approximately from 80 to 100 miles, and he appears to have taken 110 hours to traverse this distance, since he started on the 8th and only began his attack at Niuchiatung late on the 12th.

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Greater speed may, indeed, have been impracticable, but, nevertheless, the pace was too slow to ensure success. We have frequently noticed the failure of the Japanese to organise raids against the much longer and more exposed Russian communications, and our allies have now received a practical demonstration of the methods of this nature of operations. But, in order to exercise a serious influence upon the course of events, Japanese raiders must strike beyond the zone of the operating armies, and must be able to maintain themselves for weeks at a time in the vicinity of the line and break it every night. It is something even to arrest the night running of trains, since the traffic on the line is thereby both reduced and disorganised. A raid of the character of that undertaken by Mishchenko can have no serious influence upon the march of events, and if Kuropatkin hoped to locate the Japanese masses it is possible that he failed.

Whether this raid was an isolated stroke, or whether it was planned as part of some general movement, there is little at present to show. M. Gaston Dru telegraphs from St. Petersburg that he learns from a sure source that Russian offensive movement is imminent, and that we are on the eve of great military events; but as this correspondent has been assuring us for weeks past that "les Japonais ne prendront pas Port Arthur," he has the character of true prophet to regain.¹ Kuropatkin, we assume, has maintained his position for so long in order to take something of the strain off Port Arthur. He is now a free agent, and Oyama is receiving large reinforcements both from Port Arthur and from Japan. After the lesson of the Shaho, we find it hard to believe

¹ M. Dru undoubtedly regained his character of true prophet. Looking back, we see that on January 17 he sent to the *Echo de Paris* the following accurate forecast of the battle of Heikautai. "I learn from an authoritative source that it is Gripenberg who will take the offensive in the plain of the Hunho with four army corps and a great part of the cavalry and field artillery. Linievitch and a part of the army under Kaulbars will hold the lines south of Mukden, while the rest of Kaulbars' army will harass the Japanese right. Lastly Kuropatkin, holding the mass of his forces in the centre, can reinforce one or other of his wings according to circumstances."

that the Russian commander will once more commit the folly of announcing his intention to the world before carrying it into execution. The weather appears to have improved, rendering operations of a kind practicable, but it is still exceedingly doubtful whether either army can profitably undertake considerable operations at this season.

It is at this moment, when Russia still occupies Chinese territory in Manchuria which she undertook to evacuate, and traverses other parts for the profit of her military operations, that she sees fit to address a Circular Note to the Powers complaining that the Chinese lamb is muddying the waters of neutrality. Russia, no doubt, by means of the minatory clauses of this circular, hopes to frighten China into the withdrawal of her embargo upon the despatch of supplies to the Army of Manchuria *via* Hsinmintun, an act which has caused great irritation at the Russian Headquarters. But the effect will rather be to create a greater stringency on the frontier, and the best reply of China would be to arrest, if she can, the traffic in live stock from Mongolia, which is the main source of the Russian supply.

Every one knows, and, indeed, recognises with surprise and satisfaction, that China has been blameless within the limits of her impotence to prevent infractions of her neutrality by the belligerents. She has carried out the orders issued by the proclamation published in the *Peking Gazette* on February 13 last, and has strictly adhered to the desires expressed in Mr. Hay's Note. If Count Lamsdorff has not been convinced by the statements of the well-informed correspondent of *The Times*, "Far East," he would do well to ask M. Delcassé to supply him with a copy of the report of M. Philippe Berthelot, who has just returned after two years' residence in China on an official mission. M. Berthelot declares that the *mot d'ordre* in China has been strict neutrality throughout, and that the sentiment of prudence is dominant at Peking. He states that China is only anti-Russian so far as she is anti-European;

that she fears she may have to pay the bill at the end of the war, and consequently "shams dead" in order to escape notice. Japanese influence, he adds, is much less than might be expected, and he concludes that the Chinese desire no masters, are in no way affected by any modern movement, and have no desire save for their individual liberty. These opinions of M. Berthelot are the direct negation of the contentions of the Russian circular.

The so-called disclosures of the *Echo de Paris* on the subject of Japanese designs against French Indo-China are in the same category of ideas. They are palpably and demonstrably apocryphal, and we miss, almost with regret, the practised hand of Esterhazy, who would never have committed himself to such a clumsy imposture. The world takes such pleasure in being gulled that we see even serious journals allow themselves the comment that General Baron Kodama may have written the rubbish attributed to him. To go as far as this we have, first, to assume that Kodama was wholly ignorant of important dates, and of leading facts of history in which he played a distinguished part, and we have further to assume, from the strategical lunacy attributed to him, that he is an entirely incapable man. For a beginning that is much to ask of us; but, if we take the trouble to read further, it becomes clear that the whole conception of this Japanese attack was planned by a man who has never given a thought to naval warfare and knows nothing of its first principles. So long as France possesses a navy equal to the demands of her policy she rests secure, and no Power save one possessing a superior fleet can disturb her by way of the sea at home or abroad. But if she wages war at sea against superior naval forces, then her colonies and possessions abroad are not worth six months' purchase. The conditions of our own tenure of empire rest on precisely similar foundations, and it is only if, and when, our respective possessions become conterminous with those of great military states on

land that we each become subject to all the pains and penalties attaching to a continental position.

Vice-Admiral Dubassoff, the Russian representative on the international board assembled at Paris to inquire into the North Sea incident, has been hitherto credited with the diplomatic tact required for the fulfilment of a delicate mission; but, unless the account of his truly extraordinary statement to the *Echo de Paris* receives a much more explicit and authoritative contradiction than we gather from the Paris correspondent of *The Times* has hitherto been given to it, we shall have to conclude that diplomacy is not a business in which this gallant sailor is likely to make a reputation. For the *Echo de Paris* is a newspaper so devoted to Russian interests, and has so often proved the well-informed mouthpiece of the Russian authorities, and especially of the Russian Admiralty, that we may feel certain it would not lightly have given publicity to the views ascribed to Admiral Dubassoff. Even if he thought it expedient to repudiate them, we should still have good reason to believe that the repudiation was dictated by considerations of expediency rather than by any radical disagreement of principle.

It is, indeed, not news to any one that the Russians do not consider the Baltic Fleet sufficiently powerful to engage the Japanese squadrons with success, but for Admiral Dubassoff to declare that, even with the promised reinforcement of a third squadron, the task allotted to the fleet is still beyond its power cannot be described as a very wise or a very spirited confession.

But that part of the reported interview might have been allowed to pass, had it not been supplemented by another, in which the admiral has the assurance to declare that, things being as they are, Russia will patch up a peace in order to renew the war with a powerful and invincible fleet at a more convenient opportunity. This naval Jack Horner thinks that Russia has but to insert her thumb into the pie of war in order to draw out the plum of peace.

The admiral is completely misinformed, for Russia will never obtain peace on those terms; no, not if she wages war for the next ten years. It has, of course, always been a matter of serious consideration for Japan how far she might be able to rely upon the sincerity of Russia when the hour of a settlement approached. The admiral now tells her, with a calmness and *naïveté* quite unsurpassed, that she cannot rely upon Russia at all; that the peace will be a provisional truce, and that it will only be *partie remise*.

That being so, many things follow. In the first place, as Russia proposes, after peace is signed, to set to work to build a fleet in every dockyard at home and abroad, Japan must do the same, and the only means by which she can pay for this luxury without feeling the pinch will be by the extraction of a war indemnity of a hundred millions or so from her enemy.

But, even so, will peace ever be signed by Japan on such terms? If it takes two to make a quarrel, it also takes two to make a peace, and Japan will never sign a truce leaving a shred of territory or a vestige of power to Russia in the Far East so long as she has not a definite and explicit assurance, adequately guaranteed, that she will not be compelled to recommence the struggle. Why should she? Is it not better to continue the war under the favourable conditions of to-day than to adjourn hostilities until such time as Russia has healed her wounds, doubled the Trans-Siberian, and reconstructed a fleet?

Judgment has not been the strong point of Russian character throughout the war, nor have Russians shown, at any time, the remotest capacity for placing themselves in the position of their enemy. The Russian gambler, having lost his stake, rises from the table and proposes to quit the room without settling his losses and without the faintest intention of settling them. A gambler of this deplorable character sometimes finds the door barred and his opponent standing in front of

it, demanding a settlement before the bolt is drawn. Thanks to Admiral Dubassoff's indiscretion, this will now be the situation of Russia when she rises from the game of war, and, if Japan allows her to leave the room without a full, frank, and explicit settlement, she is a very different Power from what we believe her to be. Admiral Dubassoff is most condescending. He will leave Japan Port Arthur, and even the ground her armies occupy. He is generous, is this diplomatic admiral, and we should not be surprised if he were even to propose to admit the integrity of Japan as one of the conditions of peace. These puerilities might be excusable in the children of Russian nurseries, but from an admiral, charged with a most important mission by his Imperial master, we had the right to expect a modicum, at least, of knowledge of the world, and a degree, no matter how infinitesimal, of common sense.

No, peace does not lie upon the ground for the first or the last of Russians to pick up when the fancy seizes them. Japan has had an almost unparalleled course of unbroken victories by land and sea, and her situation allows her, not to seek peace, but to accord it. We have certainly every right to expect that this stupid, not to say disastrous, pronouncement will be promptly and categorically disavowed; for nothing that has yet been said or done on either side is more damaging for the hope of a permanent settlement than this amazing piece of ineptitude.

Colonel Gädke, whose very quaint and original letters to the *Tageblatt* from the seat of war are sadly missed during this close season of the Eastern campaign, has favoured *The Standard* with an interesting summary of his views. He thinks that his Russian friends are superior in numbers and in undaunted courage; he does not consider that the chances of a Japanese victory at Mukden are very great; he still harps on Korea and its capture by Kuropatkin; but he admits that the war is abhorred by the Russian nation, and declares that he cannot venture any forecast of the

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events of the second campaign, since they remain veiled from him by the greatest uncertainty.

The German colonel is naturally forced to impose a great reserve upon himself, since it is not fitting that he should say anything that might be of disadvantage to those who have been his hosts, and, we trust, may be again. But, reading between the lines, we see a marked change in his tone since he first began to write upon the war, and, if his thoughts still run on Russian victories, they are evidently inspired by no very remarkable confidence. He is quite right, in the Russian interest, to count the armies by battalions, since the Russians have preferred to send fresh units instead of drafts to make good losses, but to compare 840 Russian with 268 Japanese battalions is scarcely an illuminating contrast.

The Japanese units, thanks to the regular play of the *dépôt* system, which is indispensable for success in war, have been consistently maintained at full strength throughout the campaign. Gädke does not tell us, as no doubt he might, that when Kuropatkin began the Shaho battle his companies averaged only 150 men apiece, instead of 240. He does not tell us that Russian regiments, after that action, became battalions, and battalions companies, nor does he bring out, as an example, the condition of the 10th Army Corps at the end of November. We must therefore fill up the gap in his narrative.

The war strength of a Russian army corps gives over 28,000 rifles; but at the date we have named the 10th Army Corps could only place 9,300 rifles in the firing line. The 10th Army Corps, in short, was only one-third of its proper strength. Since the Shaho was fought the 8th Army Corps has reached Mukden, and, if all has gone well on the railway, the combatant parts of the 16th Army Corps and of the 1st, 2nd, and 5th Rifle Brigades should now be at disposal, representing an increase of about 100,000 men and 200 guns during the past three months, and making up the total strength

of the army, at a generous estimate, to about 270,000 men and 1,230 guns. The Japanese, according to a usually well-informed Austrian military journal, have been correspondingly reinforced by the 7th, 8th, Formosa, and two reserve divisions, equalising matters at least; while before the campaign reopens there will reach the army, or appear in some other part of the theatre of war, very heavy reinforcements of fresh troops from Japan.

When our German mentor comes to discuss the intentions of the Russian commander he is on safer ground, and his opinions are possibly of greater value. He is inclined to believe that Kuropatkin will wait till the end of April before making any great effort, which is a sensible view, considering the delay entailed by the reorganisation of the three Russian armies. He thinks, however, that the Japanese are not likely to await the moment which is most favourable for their enemy, and no one can deny that this also is highly probable. At what precise moment the Japanese numbers will reach their *maximum* it is not for us to inquire; but we can feel reasonably well assured that the moment will be selected with full knowledge of all the circumstances, and that their attack will be carried out with the desire and intention of obtaining a decisive victory.

Apart from the closing scenes of the great tragedy of Port Arthur, the attention of Russia and of the civilised world has been almost wholly absorbed of late by the Liberal movement which has shaken the autocratic edifice from roof to basement, and must necessarily have momentous consequences, since it is clear that the forces which have produced this political disturbance draw their strength from every class of the Russian community, from the highest nobles down through every intermediate class to the lowest of the peasants. This evolution, which trembles on the brink of revolution, can hardly fail to have a very decisive influence upon the duration of the war, since not only

are men's minds in Russia wholly preoccupied with projects of internal reform, but they are also set upon the arrest of hostilities as a necessary preliminary to these reforms. The state of Poland, and the excesses committed by mobilised troops, which have been of a far more serious nature than has been allowed to transpire, all tend in the same direction.

The great Liberal movement in Russia is by far the most important event in the foreign politics of our time, and deserves every attention on the part of distant observers. Whether it will succeed, and, if so, what will be its effect upon foreign politics, is still hidden in the gloom of the future, but that it will necessarily entail a weakening of Russian power, or a period of rest for Russia's neighbours, is at present quite unproved. The French Revolution was a great explosive force which produced results far beyond the borders of France herself. Far from thinking that a Russian revolution will be confined to the territories of the Tsar, we should rather ask ourselves whether this great national movement may not entail political consequences transcending even those of the great revolt of France. When the Slav genius, hitherto trammelled and trodden down, finds scope at last for its superabundant energies and remarkable gifts, we may all be compelled to rearrange our ideas.

The demands upon the Russian population during the past year have been very heavy. The contingent for 1904 was fixed at 447,302 men by a ukase of June 20 of last year, a figure representing an increase of 126,570 men over the numbers for 1903; whereas during the last twenty years the average increase of the contingent has stood at about 5,000 men. In addition to this drain upon the people, there have been the successive partial mobilisations, numbering seven in all, up to and inclusive of that of December 15 last, to which we have already alluded. Out of the 764 recruiting districts, all but 250 have been already bled for men, some once, some twice, and in a few

cases even as many as three times. The exact numbers taken for despatch to the East, and to fill the place of units despatched from Western garrisons, cannot at present be given with the desirable accuracy, but it would appear that, out of an average of 5,000 available reserves in each district, nearly one-half have been already withdrawn from the districts affected by the mobilisation orders. The youngest classes have, of course, been taken first; but it seems likely that the order of mobilisation carried out last December affected a much larger number of men than any previous order, and that it has entailed the employment of an unusually high proportion of married men. According to the writer's information, the number affected by the December mobilisation was 237,000, which is more likely to be correct than the figure of 320,000 given by foreign professional journals, and confessedly only a rough approximation.

These double demands of increased contingents and endless drains upon the reserves must necessarily have a deplorable influence upon the population of Russia, and it is well known that mobilisation during winter has a particularly cruel effect upon the peasants, since they have often to travel long distances to join their headquarters, and generally find no means of restoring their treasured sheepskins or fur coats to their families. These valuable possessions are generally sold for a song to the local Jew, and only in rare instances are returned to the peasant's family. The unit of labour in Russia from time immemorial has been a man, a woman, and a horse. The removal of so many working hands must affect a scattered agricultural community very seriously, and, as all evidence shows that the war grows more unpopular every day, there may be limits beyond which even Russian autocracy cannot safely travel.

This general disturbance of the social life in agricultural centres has now been rendered more dangerous by an extension of the unrest to the manufacturing

classes of St. Petersburg. The workmen of the Oboukhoff foundry, of the Putiloff manufactory, of the Lezner and Stieglitz establishments, and, lastly, of the Neva dockyard, are all out on strike, and, if the railway *employés* join in the movement, a very grave national danger will confront the Russian Government. The solidarity of labour in Russia and the close attachments between the workmen in the rural districts and the towns explain the sudden and notable outburst of something that already resembles a general revolt, and, if the 40,000 men of the garrison of the capital are perfectly capable of suppressing an outbreak, it is also necessary to remember that the 1st Army Corps of the garrison has been sent east, and their place has been taken by reserve troops, and that it has yet to be proved whether the army can be trusted to put down a movement which has a political complexion, and is either openly or secretly favoured by nine-tenths of the Russian people.

Those who have seen a Russian mob driven about like sheep by a couple of Cossacks, armed with nothing more formidable than the *nagaika*, or Cossack whip, may indeed doubt whether Russians have the genius of revolution, but the Liberal movement has been so rapid, its dominance over opinion so marked, and its effects so widespread, that no one will care to foretell the future, or to affirm that the interests of a small and partly effete governing class are certain to overcome the desires, the demands, and the insistence of a great people.

CHAPTER XL¹

THE BATTLE OF HEIKAUTAI

SOME time after the last great conflict, which might with greater justice and expediency rather have been called the battle of Yentai than of the Shaho, the Japanese gradually extended their left towards the Hun, and the snow-battle of January 25 to 29, called Heikautai or Sandepu, was restricted, in the main, to a certain number of fortified villages and localities near the frozen waters of that river. Of these villages, Sandepu, and the hamlet variously described as Heikautai, Kheigutaya, or Cheigutai, were the chief centres of attraction.

The Russian force engaged was the 2nd Manchurian Army under General Gripenberg, consisting now of the 8th European Army Corps, a division of the 10th, the 61st Reserve Division, the 5th Rifle Brigade, and the 1st East Siberian Army Corps, besides a large body of cavalry under the enterprising Mishchenko, or approximately, 85,000 men and 350 guns.

The Japanese left was thrown back from Sandepu south-westward along the left bank of the Hun, as though in anticipation of the attack which actually took place. During the whole course of the battle the Japanese were greatly outnumbered, and the importance of the splendid defence of Sandepu against the combined attack of the 8th and 10th Russian Army

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of January 31, February 11, and from a letter of February 14, 1905, from *The Times* correspondent at Tokio.

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Corps becomes very clear from an inspection of the plans at the end of this chapter. January 27 would appear to have been the most critical day, but the successes of the night attacks on the evening of the 28th re-established the Japanese line, and by the 29th the balance was completely restored and the Russians were driven from the field.

The subsequent and reiterated counter-attacks made by comparatively small bodies of Russian troops upon various points of the Japanese line, all of which were repulsed with loss, convey the impression that after the 29th the Second Army was not acting by any central impulsion, but rather upon the casual initiative of subordinate commanders.

According to Marshal Oyama, the 8th and 10th Russian Army Corps assailed Chenchiehpu, while the remainder of the force attacked Heikautai. The latter village, according to General Kuropatkin's first despatch of January 26, was taken after a brave resistance between 10 and 11 p.m. on the night of January 25 ; but Sandepu held firm, although portions of the village were occupied by the Russians, and, after suffering a loss variously but unofficially estimated at 1,600 to 4,000 men, the two Russian army corps retreated and restricted themselves to a vicious bombardment. General Sakharoff is to be complimented upon a graceful turn of phrase in his description of this affair. He tells us that it was impossible for the Russians to remain at Sandepu without risking defeat. It is, indeed, customary for one army or the other to quit the field at the close of a battle, but it has been usually considered hitherto that they do not take this step to avoid the risk of defeat, but because they had already suffered it.

As soon as the Russian attack developed, Marshal Oyama, following the precedent of the Shaho, promptly took the offensive on his left. The battle then resolved itself into a number of more or less independent encounters for the possession of the various localities, and,



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at Heikautai especially, attacks and counter-attacks followed in quick succession. This village and other important positions remained finally in Japanese hands, and the Russians were ultimately driven away to the north, with a loss of some 20,000 killed, wounded, and prisoners, while the sufferings entailed upon the troops by exposure in the open during the very worst season of the year are certain to be translated by a large muster of candidates for admission to Russian hospitals.

¹ The first and most striking fact on the Japanese side is that the brunt of the fighting was borne by two Japanese divisions and a brigade of cavalry. Two other divisions were engaged, but the part they took in the fight was so subordinate that it need scarcely be taken into account. Among the seven Russian divisions, about one half were troops newly arrived from Europe ; troops which had never fought previously, nor had ever known the bitterness of defeat. Such, for example, were the 14th and 15th Divisions of the 8th Army Corps, and the 5th Brigade of Rifles. The tactics of these troops impressed their enemy favourably. Their movements were co-ordinated to a degree not previously witnessed ; they took advantage of cover with remarkable skill, and their steadiness in retreat elicited admiration.

As to the train of events and considerations which led to this flanking movement by the Russians, the opinions of Japanese staff officers seem to be tolerably unanimous. They take the battle of the Shaho as the starting-point of their explanation. Kuropatkin went into that battle with twenty-one divisions, and his casualties amounted to about 30 per cent. The conclusion forced upon him by the result was that to attack with any prospect of success he must wield a very much larger force. In that sense he made urgent appeal to St. Petersburg, and, in response, fresh troops were hurried out, so that many new corps-names began

¹ The following account of the battle from the Japanese side is taken almost verbatim from a hitherto unpublished account by *The Times* correspondent at Tokio.

to appear upon the roll of his command : some of these, however, were little more than skeletons, and, moreover, the reliefs required to fill the decimated ranks of the old corps arrived slowly. But matters did not press. The Russian general had little anticipation of any serious fighting after the beginning of the cold weather, and he is said to have believed that Port Arthur would certainly hold out until the spring, by which time his forces would be tolerably complete and reorganised into the three armies with which he intended to resume the offensive. Meanwhile he expended all available energy in fortifying his positions, and the Japanese did the same, so that long before the close of the year the lines on both sides had become exceedingly strong. For the purposes, therefore, of his spring campaign, Kuropatkin had to find some opening, and his attention was naturally directed to the region between the Hun and the Liau. Unoccupied by either army, and yet within striking distance of the bases of both, this district offered the only vulnerable point.

To test the opportunities it might offer, Kuropatkin launched Mishchenko on his daring raid at the beginning of the year, and though this commander achieved nothing tangible, he demonstrated that the Japanese defences and dispositions in the plains between the two rivers were very slight. Kuropatkin is said to have intended to utilise this knowledge two months subsequently. But the unexpected happened. Port Arthur surrendered at the New Year instead of holding out till April, and Kuropatkin then imagined that unless he struck forthwith, the numerical preponderance on which he based his hopes would be redressed by the addition of Nogi's army to Oyama's forces. Further, he feared that were his soldiers left inactive to brood over the fall of the fortress, their *morale* would be impaired ; and, finally, his country's domestic troubles urged him to attempt something conspicuous. So he sent out Gripenberg, intending to act with the rest of his forces as circumstances might dictate.

His calculation was defective, however, in one cardinal respect. He should have known that if the fall of Port Arthur at so early a date was unexpected by himself, so also was it unexpected by the Japanese, and that, consequently, the army investing the fortress did not enter into the dispositions made by Oyama in the valleys of the Shaho and the Hun. He should have known, too, that the enemy had not been waiting quietly for three months to be outnumbered, and that if reinforcements were reaching Mukden, they were also reaching Liauyang, independently of the Port Arthur army.

It may be well to refer here to a misconception which has already been circulated from several centres—namely, that Gripenberg's turning movement would have succeeded had not the army released from Port Arthur advanced up the west bank of the Hun by forced marches so as to threaten the communications of the Russian divisions then fighting on the east bank of the river. Nothing of the kind occurred; Nogi's army took no part whatever in the battle, nor exercised any influence on its issue. As to where Nogi and his men now are, the Japanese military authorities very properly maintain silence, but he was not at the Battle of Heikautai, and was never intended to be there.

A second mistake which Japanese strategists lay to Kuropatkin's charge is the isolated character of the task assigned to Gripenberg. Had he credited his foes with the gift of appreciating a military situation he would have anticipated that an attack on their left would not find them so unprepared as to necessitate a large detachment of force from their centre. Yet unless such detachment took place his plan was to remain himself on the defensive, and a programme of that half-active, half-passive nature could not succeed except by accident. Compelled, as he imagined, to strike prematurely, so far as his own preparations were concerned, his only chance lay in striking with every unit of force he commanded.

General Gripenberg no doubt believes that had

Kuropatkin attacked all along the Japanese centre and right during January 25 and 26, the final result of the battle would have been different. On those two days he must have imagined himself very near success. He was confronted by only one Japanese division—a reserve division—and by a brigade of cavalry. Each Japanese army now consists of three divisions, and as there were ten divisions at the Shaho, one constituted the general reserve. This was the 8th (or Awomori) Division, under Lieutenant-General Tatsumi. One of the last to leave Japan, it had not joined the forces in the field until after the Battle of the Shaho, and consequently it made its *début* at Heikautai. The Awomori Division was in everybody's mouth three years ago, when a whole company of its men perished in the snow of Northern Japan. At the time of this tragedy, people, speaking partly in jest, said that troops which included snow-marches among their manoeuvres must be destined to fight against the Russians in Siberia. Strangely enough, the division's first battle took place against the Russians in a terrible snowstorm, and the only officer who had survived the Awomori disaster, Captain Kuraishi, fell in the fight. The Awomori men made a fine struggle against an overwhelmingly superior force of the enemy, but they failed single-handed to capture Heikautai, and on the evening of the 26th there was imminent danger that they would be enveloped by the Russians on both flanks. The communications between their centre and right were actually severed when the enemy drove a wedge between Heikautai and Chenchieh-pau.

From the morning of the 27th the 5th (Hiroshima) Division, under Lieutenant-General Kigoshi, entered the field of fighting. It had marched from Yentai to Lantungkau on the preceding evening. By these two divisions and by the cavalry the battle was fought. The Hiroshima troops had orders to support the Awomori men for the purpose of re-taking Heikautai and of forcing back the Russian wedge at Liutiaokau.

They therefore separated into two brigades, one moving direct towards Heikautai, the other towards Tatai, where the enemy's van was situated. From the starting-point (Lantungkau) to Tatai the distance is only three miles, yet the brigade, leaving the former at eight in the forenoon, did not reach the latter till two in the afternoon. It may be doubted whether men ever marched into battle in such a snowstorm. The downfall had commenced on the 22nd, and on the morning of the 24th it was accompanied by a Manchurian gale, which lasted without intermission until the 28th, driving down the mercury to 20° below the freezing point. The ground was as hard as rock, and every few paces taken by man or horse caused such "balling" that a halt was necessary to cut away this encumbrance, and the guns, limbers and ammunition waggons are described as having mounted constantly into the air on snow-tyres which formed nearly as fast as they could be slashed off with swords and bayonets.

Exhausted by the labours of advancing under such conditions, the troops, when they came within rifle-range of the enemy, found themselves on open ground affording no shelter whatever, whereas the Russians, with quick-firers, machine-guns and rifles, were pouring a hail of lead from the cover of Chinese houses. Darkness came on before anything definite had been accomplished, and the Japanese had now to face the ordeal of passing the night in battle order, without shelter of any kind, without a spark of fire, while snow fell thickly on the already thickly-covered ground, and an icy gale blew continuously. To sleep in such conditions would have been to die. The night had to be passed with men stamping their feet, beating their hands together and watching to prevent any one lying down. It is said that after such suffering these men were irresistible in their rushes to expel the enemy from his shelter. By noon they had taken Tatai and Liutiao-kau, and two hours later saw them in Likioswopeng, so that communication between the parts of the 8th

Division was re-established. The recovery of Heikautai followed.

As for the other two divisions engaged, the Second (Sendai) did some defensive work which involved casualties totalling only 117 of all ranks, and the Third (Nagoya) had but 38 men in action. This little detachment, 30 infantry and 8 sappers, achieved a remarkable record. They were in a Chinese house at Yapatai—about two and a half miles west of Litajentun—when a battalion of Russians attacked the place. Loopholes not being pierced in the wall encircling the enclosure, attempts to fire over it led to the seizure of the men's rifles by the enemy. But the sappers had prepared dynamite grenades, and when these were thrown among the Russians there resulted such casualties that the enemy quickly retreated. One hundred and two dead bodies and 180 rifles were subsequently found outside the wall. Such grenades had been commonly used at Port Arthur, but this was the first occasion of their employment in the field.

From this it will be seen that the operations of the Japanese troops in the Battle of Heikautai were very simple. They sent one division against Heikautai—namely, to strike at the centre of the advancing Russians—and having divided a second division into two brigades, they deployed one of these brigades on either flank of the division first engaged. The 8th Division had been in action two whole days (25th and 26th); had failed to take Heikautai, though obstinately keeping up the assault; had been forced asunder by the enemy at a point between its centre and right; had lost the cavalry screen on its left flank and was threatened with envelopment there, when the 5th Division entered the field most opportunely.

The cavalry screen consisted of the same troops that had done good work more than three months previously in a wholly different part of the field, namely, on both banks of the Taitse River near Penhsihu when Kuropatkin fought the Battle of the Shaho. They had

opposed and helped materially to frustrate the Russian general's attempt to turn the right flank of the Japanese, and now they rendered similar service on the left flank, whither they had been moved some days previously in the sequel of Mishchenko's rides down the Liau Valley. Wukiatsz was the scene of their second exploit, and the time was January 25. Greatly outnumbered by the enemy's cavalry and with only machine-guns to oppose to his 12 field-pieces supplemented by a much larger equipment of quick-firers, they nevertheless held their ground all through the afternoon, and this checked a movement which would have placed many sotnias of Cossacks on the rear of the Japanese division attacking Heikautai. There can be no doubt that on January 25 and 26 a situation existed very critical for the Japanese. If it be contended that the terrible weather impeded the advance of their second line of troops, it must also be admitted that the forward movement of the Russians was retarded by the same cause, though perhaps not in an equal degree, since the Japanese had the storm in their faces. Japanese staff officers think that Gripenberg's enterprise was in itself well planned, but that it laboured under the fatal disadvantage of want of co-ordination with Kuropatkin. The forces engaged were in the approximate ratio of seven Russians to four Japanese.

The British public have read many accounts of Manchurian battles from the pens of British correspondents. They will probably be interested to hear a Japanese description of the cavalry engagement alluded to above given by Surgeon Hasegawa Haruji, who served with the Japanese cavalry :—

Our Brigade of cavalry, which had been operating originally in the vicinity of Sankwaishishan, received orders to move towards Penhsihu at the time of the Russian attack in October. It proceeded thither rapidly, and after repulsing the enemy's wide flanking manœuvre, had the honour to receive a *Kanjo*, or document of commendation. Subsequently it remained in that district confronting the enemy, but on January 12, when the Russian

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cavalry, under General Mishchenko, made its appearance near Haicheng and threatened our commissariat line, an order came to the Brigade, reaching us on the 13th. Accordingly, on the 15th, we left our camp and marched a distance of some seventy-five miles, thus passing from the right wing of our army to the left. On the 25th we had a hot engagement at Wukiatsz; an engagement so fierce and so sanguinary that the commander-in-chief subsequently accorded to it the name of "The Battle of Wukiatsz."

Reconnaissances made by us on the preceding day having disclosed that a division of the enemy's cavalry, under General Mishchenko, consisting of twenty sotnias and twelve guns, was moving southward, a squadron of Colonel Homda's regiment, to which had been entrusted the duty of watching the Wukiatsz region, was sent out that night (24th) on outpost duty, and on the morning of the 25th, two scouting parties, consisting of a squadron each, were also despatched to observe the enemy. At 11 a.m. an orderly brought word that a force of the enemy's cavalry, consisting of twenty sotnias with twelve field-pieces and some machine-guns, was pressing our troopers, and that the latter were retiring in close touch with the Cossacks. The Homda Regiment at once received orders to advance, and distributing themselves along the line of defences at Wukiatsz, the men waited for the enemy. At 12.15 p.m. the Cossacks appeared in a cloud on our front. At a distance of from 1,500 to 1,600 metres they opened rifle fire, but we made no reply until they had approached to about half that range, when we gave them a volley followed by independent firing. They evidently suffered heavily, but relying on their numbers they pushed on, extending in the direction of both flanks with the apparent intention of enveloping us. Just at this critical moment our machine-guns arrived, and, taking up positions so as to guard our flanks, awaited the enemy's coming. Our men judged the distance so well, and shot so accurately, that a rain of bullets fell on the Russians. They were compelled to retire out of range, but we could see that they received reinforcements, and that they would advance again.

At fifty minutes past noon the enemy were observed opening out from their centre towards both flanks. We inferred that their artillery was about to come into action and we made our dispositions accordingly. Almost immediately afterwards the thunder of the guns was heard. Our men had hardly time to tell each other that shells were coming to pay us a visit when the projectiles began to burst in our midst. We had only machine-guns, which were useless at such a range. Thus the enemy's artillery had a safe stage all to themselves; and, contrary to their wont, they laid

their pieces calmly and accurately, so that every shot took effect. Big trees were split, houses were wrecked, stones and tiles flew about. Now a shell would slaughter four or five men, scattering their bodies in fragments. Anon, one would set a thatched roof on fire, and as a strong north wind was blowing, the whole village soon burst into flames, the tongues of fire and volumes of smoke ascending into the snowstorm. We could scarcely find refuge for ourselves, much less for our horses. The Cossacks now sought to force their way into our trenches from the flanks. They pushed up to about thirty metres, and as our force was insufficient to guard the whole position we had an arduous time, our men being obliged to hasten from one menaced point to another. Our ammunition now threatened to give out, and when one of our men left the shelter of the trenches to obtain a fresh supply, he fell riddled with bullets, to be succeeded by another and yet another in succession, until, after repeated failures, one at length got through. It was no time to take thought of death. Major Ninagawa fell dead. Captain Kaba, his second-in-command, had his leg torn off by a shell. Lieutenant Kawasaki's thigh was shattered. Sergeant-Major Nayeda was shot through the neck. All around men lay stiff in death or writhing in agony. But every survivor remained calm at his post. For four long hours our soldiers stood under this hail of projectiles from gun and rifle. No one showed a sign of quailing. At 4.55 in the afternoon the enemy, whether deterred by our endurance, or wearied by our obstinacy, or shaken by his own losses, began to retire. In a moment a body of our men were on his tracks, while the rest made preparations to withdraw from their untenable position. Twice messengers had reached us from headquarters with orders to retire, as the enemy's cavalry and artillery had worked round by the left and severed the communications with our forces on the north bank of the Taitse River; but our commander replied that to retire in the face of a greatly superior enemy would be fatal, and that he would either die in his place or bring off his men in due time. His tenacity was rewarded. The men ultimately fell back quietly and in perfect order.

Concerning our wounded, I may explain that there were originally with this force two surgeons and five men of the field-hospital corps, but one of the surgeons and two of the men had been summoned elsewhere. Thus I was left with three assistants. The latter worked with the utmost zeal and celerity, and were so earnestly aided by the soldiers, that when our force retired not a single wounded man was left to fall into the enemy's hands: all were safely carried off, to our intense satisfaction. Perhaps it may be of interest to add a few words about the handling of our

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wounded. Acting under orders, my assistants and I established a temporary hospital in a building southward of Wukiatsz. We were about 150 metres in rear of the fighting line, and were consequently too close, as well as being in the direction of the enemy's guns. We had no choice, however, as this was the only suitable building. Our fears were justified, for we found our hospital the target of many missiles. One man, just as I raised him in my arms for the purpose of dressing his wound, had his leg shattered by a shell which came through the mud wall of the house and grazed my tunic as it passed out. In these circumstances the field-hospital orderlies worked as calmly and as carefully as though no such thing as a battle was going on close at hand, and thanks to their courage all the wounded, a great number, were duly tended.

It is said that when men have made up their mind to die they act and speak like gods. That day, when the fight was at its fiercest and the bullets were falling like rain, Lieutenant Sakamoto, who had been sent out towards the right flank on scouting duty, found himself pressed by a greatly superior force of the enemy and unable either to advance or to retreat. He sent an orderly to ask the commanding officer for final instructions. The reply was, "Go back and say to the Lieutenant, 'Die.'" The orderly, saluting, rode off. What a grand order—"die," the one word "die"!

CHAPTER XLI¹

A YEAR OF WAR

A YEAR ago the Japanese Minister at St. Petersburg broke off relations with the Russian Government, informing Count Lamsdorff that these relations no longer possessed any value for Japan, and that the Island Empire reserved to herself the right to take such steps as might be necessary to protect her menaced interests.

By the number of her soldiers, the extent of her territory, and the audacity of her statecraft, Russia a year ago dominated opinion in two continents, and seemed to many to hold the fate of Europe and Asia in the hollow of the Imperial hand. There was only one opinion in Russia upon the result of the campaign, and, England apart, there was only one in Europe. Japan would speedily be crushed, her armies and fleets scattered to the winds, and peace signed upon the ruins of Tokio. So said the *Invalid*, the official mouthpiece of the Ministry of War, and every General Staff in Europe save ours, echoing the cry, proclaimed the speedy downfall of Japan.

But England doubted. Better informed upon the affairs of the Far East, better able by bitter-sweet experience in many distant fields of war to appreciate the superhuman difficulties confronting the Russian arms, and, finally, unschooled to take their opinions at second hand even from the most illustrious of foreign soldiers, Englishmen believed in, as they hoped for, the success of Japan.

¹ *The Times*, February 6, 1905.

A year has passed, and, truly, when we recall the Russian vaunts during the early months of last year and compare them with this unparalleled record of twelve months passed without one ray of glory lighting upon the draggled standards of the Tsar, when we think of the broken armies, the sunken ships, the captured strongholds, the host of prisoners, defeat abroad and revolution at home, there is nothing better to sum up the record of the year than the words of David: How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!

Time was when it was said that the sceptre of Catherine would break, if stretched from the Baltic to the Golden Horn. If the Russian sceptre, held in the firm grasp of that most masculine of Queens, could not bear such strain, what hope was there that it could reach from the Baltic to the Yellow Sea when balanced in the irresolute hand of Nicholas II.?

Russia has fought throughout a disastrous war with all the old obstinacy and courage that have from time immemorial distinguished her arms. Such as the Russians were at Poltava, at Zorndorf, at Borodino, and at Sevastopol, such were they on the bloodstained battlefields of Manchuria. It is not the Russian army that has lost caste; it is the fundamental principles of Russian statecraft and government that have been covered with obloquy and shame. *Tout prendre, rien rendre, toujours prétendre* has been the device of Russian statesmanship ever since the halcyon days, long past, when Russia was firmly knit with England by bonds of mutual amity and confidence. The policy of deliberate and shameless aggression has reached its inevitable climax in military disaster, while its cost has reduced the wretched subjects of the Tsar to a condition of misery and degradation which leads them to welcome death in the streets at the hands of the Tsar's Guards as a happy termination of their cheerless and unnecessary existence.

Russia, an American writer has recently declared,

for her many crimes lay under the stern necessity of chastisement, and it has been the fate of Japan to wield the rod. She has carried out her necessary mission in the most effectual manner. Not a ship of the great armada, which a year ago lay proudly in the waters round the "impregnable" fortress, taken from its owners by trickery, remains in being. The waters of the Yellow Sea have closed over the shattered remnants, and the great Pacific squadron deserves its name at last. After a noble resistance, to which every soldier must do ample justice, the great fortress which stood as the sign and symbol of Russian domination over China and Japan has been laid level with the dust. A Russian army is, indeed, on Japanese soil, but it is guarded by the sentries of the Emperor of Japan.

If the Russian Government were unable to see the dangers and difficulties of the great campaign which they had entered upon with so light a heart, Russian soldiers at least soon realised them. No great campaign since the Napoleonic era has ever been waged by an army in circumstances of such stupendous difficulty. Five thousand miles from the seat of their power, in a foreign land and surrounded by an alien population passively hostile, if not actually at the service of the enemy, with the sea closed and all the life of their army depending upon a slender artery, the severance or choking of which meant strategic death, the Russians have fought on with resolution and energy deserving of a better fortune and a nobler cause. To all these enemies—time, space, and distance—there was added the worst enemy of all, the national army of a great and populous empire, almost at home, and inspired from highest to lowest with unconquerable resolution to vanquish or die.

If Russia, thanks to the extraordinary energy and skill displayed in the management of the Trans-Siberian, has nearly doubled her power of reinforcement and supply in the course of the year, and by so doing has given us a lesson that we shall only neglect

at the cost of the end of our rule in India, she has had this gain counterbalanced by the discovery, the tardy and unexpected discovery, that since the German armies crossed the Rhine in 1870 no such perfect machinery for war as that of Japan had been set in motion for the imposition of the national will of a great Power.

Japan has far outdistanced the sanguine hopes of her most enthusiastic admirers. The grand strategy of her campaign has been prudent, the leading of the separate armies has been satisfactory, and that of divisions and minor units often brilliant. Japan has thoroughly absorbed all that was best and greatest in the splendid army of which the Emperor William was the head, Bismarck the conscience, and Moltke the soul, and she has more than doubled the fighting efficiency of her armies by the strength of that moral code which has placed country before self, and has educated each individual soldier of the army in the firm belief that death must come before defeat. "All the columns of the attacking parties expected annihilation." So writes Marshal Oyama in his despatch upon the recent fighting, and we only hesitate whether to award the palm to soldiers who can perform, or to leaders who can command, such unexampled sacrifice for the general good.

If in personal bravery the Russian army has proved more than equal to its ancient renown, in every other characteristic that renders an army formidable it has found itself outmatched. No sane or consecutive ideas of strategy have dominated Russian councils, the leading of troops has been a century behind the times, in marksmanship, gunnery, equipment, and organisation the Russian army has been outclassed, while, thanks to the superior education of the Japanese people, the patient, slow, and faithful *mujik* from the Russian steppes has been outfought at all points, at all seasons, and in all ground.

Worst of all for Russia has been the gloomy dis-

covery of her rulers that the heart of their people is not in this war, and that they reck little of defeat or victory, annexation or evacuation, so long only as the war ends. This campaign has been the first in which a government has endeavoured to wage a distant war of aggression, in a cause unpopular to the people, by means of the conscript levies of a national army drawn from all the strata of a people, whether willing or the reverse. The disturbances and massacres at home, the excesses among the levies and the reserves, and the total and absolute failure at the front under conditions of numbers not always unfavourable for success, point a great moral and reveal the limitations imposed upon autocrats and Parliaments alike in the uses of the national conscript army of the modern stamp. For the defence of its hearths and homes against unjustifiable aggression such an army is practically invincible; for the prosecution of an unjust and unpopular war of distant aggression it is inferior in every respect to a volunteer and professional army, and the first condition for its employment in such war without disappointment abroad and revolution at home is unmixed and unqualified victory from first to last. When an army which fights because it must is opposed to another which fights because it will, when those who die for duty oppose those who die for pleasure, we have to use a larger divisor month by month to find the relative value of the former's numbers.

If we consider the might of Russia, the important character of her alliances and intimacies, and the unexpected competence of the Russian railway management, the Japanese record for the year and the outlook for the future are alike encouraging. If a second Russian fleet draws near to challenge once more for the mastery of the narrow seas, its chances of success are the reverse of good, while its hesitation to confront the test before it bodes ill of its resolution. On land Japan has closed her grasp firmly upon Korea and the Liautung Peninsula, covering both by a great army which has never yet suffered defeat. Situated where it is, this

army can afford to await the return of a season more suited for vigorous campaigning, satisfied for the moment if it can hold its own against the nervous and uneasy assaults of its brave enemy. With returning spring, or even during the course of the present month, those fresh legions that have been under training in Japan will begin to unite with the army of operations, and only after their arrival in those overwhelming numbers which alone promise annihilating success should Japan seek for a great and decisive battle. If the future conduct of Japanese operations must entirely depend upon the action of the Russian army, and if, as ever is and must be the case, the unexpected will be fruitful with many surprises by sea and land, Japan has every cause to regard the future without apprehension and to anticipate final success in a just cause.

CHAPTER XLII ¹

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1905

UNLESS diplomacy intervenes, the coming campaign promises to exceed in magnitude and to surpass in dramatic interest the great events of the past year.

The broad lines of Russian strategy are not for Russia to choose ; they are dictated by the circumstances of her situation. To accumulate the largest possible land forces, in the most efficient condition and in the shortest possible time ; to amass stores, supplies, and munitions of war in such abundance that hostilities when resumed may proceed without check ; finally, to concentrate every ship that can float and fight in order to endeavour to regain the lost command of the sea—all these things must necessarily fall within the programme of 1905, and whether these forces are then employed, so far as Russia has the option, in an attempt to overcome the enemy in arms, or in an endeavour to overawe him by their menace into the acceptance of a peace to which Russia can consent, will depend upon the resolutions or the policy of drift which may chance to prevail at the Russian capital.

The main Russian army is still and more than ever numerically formidable. Reduced to some 260,000 men by the losses incurred in the battle of Heikautai, it can rely upon a constant stream of reinforcements provided the railway remains efficient and secure. The troops now in course of transport are expected to arrive

¹ From *The Times* of February 28 and March 6, 1905.

in the following order:—3rd and 4th Rifle Brigades, 4th Army Corps, a Cossack infantry *plastun* brigade, a Caucasian Cossack cavalry division, and possibly the 10th Cavalry Division, while, intermingled with these, there are a number of minor units to which we need not for the moment refer.

When all the above troops have joined the field armies the latter will include twelve army corps, six rifle brigades, and nine divisions or brigades of mounted troops, units which, if and when complete, will more than provide the desired number of 500,000 men. But at present little more than half these numbers are available with the field armies.

The Russian War Office has made the mistake of subordinating the despatch of drafts to the transport of fresh army corps to the seat of war. The result is that there will be a steady stream of fresh units up to the end of March at least, and that only then can the drafts begin to arrive in considerable numbers to make good the losses in the regiments that have suffered. To the Japanese it is immaterial which course their enemy adopts, but for the Russian it would have been better to have sent the drafts first, so that the regiments might have incorporated them during the temporary lull in the operations. As matters stand the drafts will not begin to arrive until a little before the period assumed for the resumption of active operations. The intention is then to make up about 100 battalions and to despatch them to the front to make good the losses, but it is not a wise measure to swamp regiments with a crowd of new men and new officers during the progress of critical operations when such a harmful measure might have been avoided.

Given all the conditions, it is unlikely that the Russians will desire to recommence the war on a grand scale much before the end of April. By that date the Russian commander may hope to have 840,000 men under his command, and, provided that no great disaster occurs, it appears to be unlikely that any other fresh

units save those named will subsequently be despatched eastward, at all events before July, when the drafts to make good losses may all have joined their regiments.

Such numbers as 340,000 men represent a great army, greater probably than any living general can effectively command, but at the same time it is right to recall that a year of unbalanced defeat has necessarily diminished the fighting value of the Tsar's soldiers. Without underestimating the skill of some Russian commanders and the bravery of their men, we cannot overlook the events of the past year, nor award to Russian numbers the same importance that they possessed a year ago.

The problem of providing the necessary numbers, and of their supply and maintenance in a proper state to wage resolute war, has become much more serious than it was a year ago, when the effectives were much smaller and the resources of the theatre of operations were still intact. It is not likely that General Kuropatkin has, either now or at any time, amassed those reserves of military stores and supplies plainly required by the circumstances of his situation, nor that he has supply depôts, a day's march apart, on his line of retreat. The country has been swept clear of much that cannot be replaced, and, if Mukden falls and supplies from China fail, an additional strain will be thrown upon the cumbered Trans-Siberian. Prince Khilkoff remains indefatigable and optimistic as ever, but the further improvements he has devised upon the line are not calculated to come into operation for another six months at least. He has ordered 2,400 new trucks capable of containing 80 tons apiece, and has in hand 500 new locomotives to draw heavier trains, and, when all these are delivered in September next and heavier rails are laid throughout important sections of the line, he guarantees, subject to the concurrence of Japanese raiders, the equivalent of 22 trains of the present type a day.

But meanwhile he does not say that the sheds of

the great engineering firms in Russia are choked with damaged engines and carriages, and that the line itself is a constant source of anxiety ; he does not tell us that there is a great want of trained hands despite a four-fold increase of the *personnel* and the impoverishment of other Russian railways ; nor does he add that, despite his circum-Baikal line, traffic across the ice by sledge has had to be resumed. Moreover, the strikes at the great centres of industry, the anarchy in outlying provinces, the utter confusion and inconsequence in Russian governing circles, the spread of the revolutionary agitation to the railway *employés*, and, last but not least, the tardy awakening of the Japanese to the possibility, to which we have frequently alluded, of action against the Russian line of communications, introduce a fresh set of complications, every one of which must cause serious disturbance in Russian plans, and in combination may lead the Russian army to the brink of the abyss of military disaster.

The situation of the Russian army is indeed still precarious, and nothing that human foresight and energy can provide can radically alter the position save a crushing victory. All authorities entitled to respect are at one upon this point, and are agreed with M. Danchenko, who has just traversed the line throughout its length and states that "the daily trains transporting troops and provisions to Mukden are not sufficient for the requirements of the situation." Forage and fuel are the main difficulties, and the latter is now so hard to obtain at the front that it has to be brought from Kharbin by train, in itself completely absorbing the service of one train every day. It is to make good these deficiencies that a whole fleet of steamers has been engaged in endeavouring to reach Vladivostok. Since the fall of Port Arthur five steamers have reached their goal, sixteen have been captured, and several are overdue and unreported. The chances are seven to two against arrival, though Lloyd's, with engaging indifference to the odds, have wagered two to one to

the contrary, and the Japanese are maintaining effective watch upon all three of the channels by which Vladivostok can be reached. So well has the work been done, and so high are insurance premiums in consequence, that many sailings have been countermanded and insurances are in progress of cancellation.

The out-staying of its welcome in Madagascar by the Baltic Fleet is no matter for surprise, and the failure of the Russian Government to move on their ships at the end of January, as promised, is no strange thing, while the delicately hinted suggestion that Rozhdestvensky is acting in defiance of instructions cannot be entertained for a single moment. Given that hostilities on land, on a grand scale, will be renewed about the end of April, if the initiative remains with Russia, it is probable that the naval effort will be timed to correspond, and it is presumably hoped and intended that the Third Pacific Squadron, which left Libau on February 15, will rejoin the flag before the passage of the Indian Ocean is begun.

This situation is partly favourable to Russia and partly the reverse. On the one hand, thanks to the imperfect neutrality and boundless hospitality of France, a large Russian squadron interposes between Japan and Europe and exercises a certain influence upon the despatch of contraband from Europe to the East; Japanese naval force is drawn down towards the south, and the severity of the guard upon Vladivostok by so much, but not very much, lessened. On the other hand, this dalliance so far from the theatre of war only remotely and indirectly affects the course of operations, allows the Japanese navy a long rest for recuperation and repair, and enables the Japanese Staff ample time not only to amass stores and supplies at the front sufficient to meet the possible case of a temporary rupture of sea communications, but also grants them a period of grace in which to despatch to their field armies all those reserves and new levies which have crowded the barracks and camps of Japan during the past three months

The Baltic Fleet wavers in its choice between heroism and ignominy. It is not to be despised, and no serious man in Japan makes the mistake of under-rating its menace. But, whatever the fate of the chief battleships, their leader is cursed with the escort of a great, unwieldy, and vulnerable convoy, and will have no freedom of manœuvre. It is not unlikely that he may endeavour to seize or occupy some temporary base, place his convoy there in comparative safety, and confront the enemy with warships alone until the question of supremacy is decided. Out of all the vast armada of seventy or eighty vessels there are only five battleships which seriously count. Moreover, the delay will reduce the speed of the Russian ships and correspondingly lessen the chances of victory. The reduction in speed, owing to fouling, varies greatly in different ships even in the same waters and in the same time, but it is certain that it increases at an accelerated rate, and that a ship will add double as much fouling during the last half of a six months' period as during the first half. It is probable that there will be a general reduction of $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 knots to be made from the measured mile speeds of the Russian battleships from this cause alone before the day of battle, and that coal consumption will also mount up even at economical rates of speed. If the special conditions under which the naval campaign of 1904 has been fought have not hitherto directed our particular attention to this matter, it is probable that the impending campaign will underline in a very marked manner the importance of speed as a factor in naval war.

The great superiority of the Japanese in cruisers and torpedo craft promises the destruction of the Russian convoy; without their colliers the warships must perish of inanition; the chances are that even a successful battle will have results hardly to be distinguished from defeat. Even if a battered remnant reaches Vladivostok, and finds that it has still the right of the private *entrée*, which is quite uncertain, it will

cause a fresh and a heavy strain upon the railway to make good naval deficiencies and losses; the new harbour of refuge will be ringed about by Japanese territory, and the squadron will be nearly certain to have suffered such considerable damage as to be out of court for the rest of the campaign. Without absolute and unconditional command of the sea the Russian cause on land is not greatly advanced. Short of this, the recapture of Liautung and Port Arthur is impracticable, the invasion of Korea rather danger than profit, and even victory on land probably doomed to sterility.

The plan has indeed been suggested that Russia, accepting victory as unattainable, should proceed to wear out the enemy financially by compelling Japan to maintain a large army in Manchuria for years, until, in short, she sues for peace. But so long as Japan has this army in the field it will require occupation, weather permitting, and by reason of this occupation the face of military affairs will be liable to very important change. As to finance, Japan has made all her plans for the year, and her position is assured; Russia has, it is true, submitted a budget to the world in which the trifling cost of the war has escaped observation or remark, and it may well be that not a soul in Russia can really say what the war costs; but it will certainly be found, when the matter is properly examined, that Russian expenditure, direct and indirect, due to the war, is not a luxury that the Tsar's Empire can permit itself to indulge in for a term of years.

There is, of course, the apparent option for Russia of retreat to the interior. But it is not certain that retreat is possible without the destruction of the army. Retreat now would entail heavy loss owing to want of housing facilities, severity of the weather, deficiency of supplies and magazines, and difficulties concerning water and forage, even apart from hostile pursuit. During the second fortnight in March the thaw will be in progress, and no great movements will be practicable save

by railway, and astride this railway there may be hostile raiders. Early in April Niuchwang will reopen for the Japanese, and when the ground is fit for movement the chances are that a numerically superior Japanese army will confront the Tsar's troops. Is the Russian army sufficiently solid, well led, and mobile to conduct a successful retreat under these conditions?

Kuropatkin has a strong garrison at Vladivostok which already trembles, remembering that March 6 is the anniversary of its first bombardment; depôts and other garrisons are scattered far and wide over the zone in Russian occupation, while the recent and successful raid by Japanese cavalry upon the railway north of Mukden and the constant menace of the Hunhutzers make it imperative to maintain the defensive guards in position on the line. Nearly 150,000 men are thereby absorbed upon duties distinct from those relating to active war, yet a party of 100 Japanese cavalry has already made a first irruption upon the line, and the pursuit of this detachment, according to the Russian report, disclosed the presence of strong reserves.

The campaign thus opens gloomily for the Russian cause; discontent, despondency, and disunion are rife in the Russian camp, and Kuropatkin's leading, combined with the still unexhausted consequences of the Port Arthur entanglement, have succeeded in combining all the disadvantages inherent in offensive and defensive war, while retaining none of the advantages that each alternative customarily provides. The note of servile flattery in some Russian reports which reach the Tsar, and the confident belief in Russian victory still assumed and expressed in certain quarters which have no greater interest than to see Russia bleed to death, make it a matter of grave doubt whether the Emperor of Russia realises the facts of the present situation.

Time was when all the nations of the world assembled to do honour to the Emperor of Peace. In the great hall of the Hu's ten Bosch, surrounded by the gorgeous allegories of Jordaens, representing the

triumphs of a young Prince over vice, sickness, and war, the representatives of the nations gave their loyal and cordial assistance to further the great and generous ambitions of Nicholas II.

Vanity of vanities! If only the future could have stood revealed and we could have known that in five short years all these beatific visions would have vanished into thinnest air, and war once more have been proclaimed, by the patron and originator of the Peace Conference, the first of Russian industries!

If now we turn to the Japanese outlook upon the war we cannot fail to observe that the maintenance of the security of the maritime communications of Japanese armies is an indispensable condition of the final success of our ally, and that consequently the defeat of the armada which aspires to intercept these communications takes the first place in Japanese military interests to-day. No victories on land, be they ever so complete, can compensate for failure in this first and foremost and greatest objective. In what manner can the desired result be best obtained? Should the navy of Japan proceed to seek out and destroy the enemy in his distant lurking-place at Ste. Marie de Madagascar? Should it go half-way to meet the danger? Should it remain based on its island ports and await the onset nearer home? Serious questions, on the correct answer to which much depends.

If it could be proved, to the complete satisfaction of the Japanese Government, that Admiral Togo and his brothers in arms can, without doubt, discover Rozhdestvensky's lair, attack him there, and destroy him before the reinforcements from the Baltic join him; if they could further feel assured that the advantages of this course counterbalance the parallel disadvantages, there would be nothing better to do than to set out with all reasonable diligence. Admiral Togo left Kure on February 18; two days later the Third Pacific Squadron left Libau. Kure is some 1,000 miles nearer Nossi Bé than Libau, and, including two days' start,

Admiral Togo might reach Madagascar five days before the Third Pacific Squadron, given equal speed. In practice the Russians are such dawdlers that they would probably be out of the hunt. The stroke is not inherently impracticable nor to be ruled out hastily, provided no better course is open, provided a meeting with the enemy can be assured, and provided always that the vast preparations required to take a battle fleet over a distance of 6,000 miles and to return have been duly made.

But it is scarcely conceivable that such a movement should occur without the fact becoming known ; too many busybodies flit to and fro on these waters of strife ; Rozhdestvensky would not remain inactive when he heard that the enemy was afoot, and he might, during the passage of the Indian Ocean by the foe, either fall back on his reinforcements or slip round the Japanese and emerge triumphantly in the Yellow Sea, carrying alarm and confusion into the ranks of Russia's foes. The horizon of the smartest cruiser is limited to some twenty miles at sea. The sea is wide and the tracks across it are unnumbered. Strongly in favour, as we all must be, of the offensive at sea, pushed to its uttermost consequences, the offensive itself must always be based upon reason and directed with judgment ; it must not be of the character of a stroke of a sword in the air.

So far as regards France or any other neutral which lends its ports and waters to belligerent operations, they do this at their own risk and peril. It is a Nelsonian dictum that "it is justifiable to attack any vessels in a place from which they make an attack," and no ægis of partial neutrality can be held to cover the Russians from attack wherever they may be found upon their adventurous voyage. But it is not certain that this far-ranging attack is to Japanese advantage, nor is it at all clear that the stroke against Rozhdestvensky, even if its success depended solely upon Japan, can compensate for the manifest disadvantages entailed by the offer of a fleet action 6,000 miles from a naval

base with all its resources and all its facilities for repair after an action. To seek out the Russians off Madagascar, with the main Japanese battle fleet, appears therefore, on the whole, to offer more risk than profit and to leave too much to chance to make it a course that we should adopt were we circumstanced as Japan is to-day.

The middle course, that is to say, of fighting Russia at some point midway between Madagascar and Formosa might become necessary in certain circumstances, such as a breakdown of Russian warships, or the loss of their colliers, but as a deliberate act of Japanese choice it offers little attraction. The enemy will be in full strength, and will choose his own time for arrival. Japan is equally without war harbours under the lee of her fleet; there is always the possibility of the evasion of the enemy, though in a less degree, and surprise is a condition that can never be assured in operations of war; it is not one upon which any man can count, hope and work for it as he may.

There remains the third course, namely, that of awaiting the onset until the Russian armada arrives in the home waters of Japan. To achieve its purpose the armada is compelled to enter these waters, and in order to reach Vladivostok, its only base and repairing yard in Pacific waters at present organised, it has but a restricted choice of routes. There is no special advantage in sailing half round the world in pursuit of an enemy who must, in order to reach his objective, pass in front of our own doors. To attack the Russians as near as may be to Sasebo offers the greatest advantage to the Japanese cause, and to fall on them there with every ship that can float and to force a decisive action appears to be the wisest course. The *cruz* will be to decide how near to allow the Russians to approach before engaging them, and this point deserves the earnest attention of the Japanese Naval Staff.

If, however, this general principle of conduct be followed, Japanese ships which suffer in the action may

crawl back into friendly ports ; clean ships, supplies, ammunition, stores, and the cream of information are all at the service of the Japanese admiral near his own harbours, while to fight almost within sight of Japanese territory will add something even to the valour and tenacity of the seamen of our ally. The Russians, on the other hand, will labour under great disadvantages. All their best ships will be no fewer than six months out of dock, and by the time contact is joined the important advantage of speed should be on the side of Japan, greatly enhancing her chance of success in a fleet action. These advantages, in our opinion, and considering the skilful seamanship of our allies, are so great that there can be no reasonable doubt, provided that there be no material change in the situation, as to which of the three courses we have named is the wisest for Japan to pursue.

But if this is true for the main battle fleet, there is assuredly nothing to prevent the despatch of fast scouts and cruisers in the direction of the enemy, and we know, indeed, that this procedure has already found favour and that the lines of approach are under guard far away to the south. So far back as the end of December last certain auxiliary cruisers reached their stations and all was in readiness for action. The fact that these scouts freely showed themselves and entered Singapore and other harbours without any attempt at concealment gives us the clue to the line of thought which presides over this enterprise. It should cause no surprise if some local successes against these craft encourage the Russians to persevere, but the scouts will have carried out the most important part of their mission when they have located the armada and reported the direction of its approach. When once that duty is performed their prey should be the colliers, which should be given a short shrift.

Our own immediate concern in this affair is to hold our Eastern squadrons concentrated and ready, to keep a sharp watch upon the points of landing of our cables

in Eastern seas, and to prevent any tricks being played at the moment when the Russians set sail, a responsibility which devolves upon the Admiralty, and will, we assume, not be neglected. The Russians play for high stakes, and are not indulgent to neutrals.

But the actions we have named are not all that the cruising squadrons of Japan may aspire to dare. When the Spaniards came up the Channel they had an unpleasant experience, and off Gravelines they led the life of the damned. If the old fireship has passed away it has left formidable successors—namely, the submarine, the mine, and the torpedo—and there will possibly be more play now for the individuality and initiative of young officers of the Japanese navy than there ever was during the performance of the set pieces at Port Arthur. It is also conceivable that the torpedoes to be employed may prove to be more formidable weapons, and the crews be better skilled in their use, than during the earlier phase of the naval war.

Turning now to the future of the land campaign, we can say broadly that, just as the first year of the war afforded us convincing proofs of the mettle of the Japanese army, so will the second year give us the measure of the Elder Statesmen and Ministers who surround and advise the Emperor of Japan. The Japanese army we now know, and it is needless to sing the praises of troops whose valour and resolution have been acclaimed throughout the world. Whether the statesmen of Japan are prudent, far-seeing, and resolved, as we have every reason to believe them to be, the next few months will gradually disclose.

Early in the war we ventured to lay stress upon certain features of the campaign which had not then, in our opinion, received adequate recognition, namely, first, the importance for Japan to fight out the campaign near the sea, and, secondly, the necessity, which also lay upon her rulers, to foresee and provide for the creation of those reserve field armies which constitute one of the most marked distinctions between the old

order of armies and the new. The records of the past campaign disclose that Japanese statesmen sufficiently bore in mind the first *desideratum* but that they bestowed inadequate recognition upon the second. That there was much to excuse this lapse we must all allow, since the influence of a single line of railway upon a war of this character and the capacity displayed by the Russians in their railway management were not factors that had been fully taken into account by any one in Japan or elsewhere before the outbreak of hostilities. Nevertheless, the tendency in Japan throughout the summer and autumn of 1904 was to be somewhat too tenacious of first opinions, to allow an insufficient margin for safety, to delay the formation of reserve field armies, and to overlook the truth of the maxim that only numbers can annihilate. To delay the concentration of the largest possible force that can be assembled, for the delivery of a crushing blow at the earliest possible moment in a campaign, is not in the long run economy, but the reverse. We assume, and have substantial grounds for assuming, that this neglect has been recognised and made good, but by proof alone will history judge, and applaud or condemn, the statesmen of Japan in relation to this part of their share in the conduct of the war.

Given that Japan is able with the coming spring to place from 400,000 to 500,000 men in the field and to maintain them there, what is the plan of her campaign that offers her the best chance of success? *The Times* correspondent at Tokio tells us that there are three opinions in Japan; one holds that the object of the war has been already attained, another that Vladivostok should be attacked, and a third that a march on Kharbin is necessary.

The objects for which Japan made war were the expulsion of the Russians from Manchuria, the freedom of Korea and China from Russian domination, and the conclusion of a lasting peace based on equal rights for all in the trade of the Far East, and adequate recognition

of Japan's vital interests. Not one of the three courses which seem to find favour in Japan necessarily secures these objects, for either one may be adopted and the immediate objective gained, but the end still remains far off.

The final aim for Japan is not the research nor the choice of geographical objectives, but the imposition of peace upon Russia as nearly as may be upon Japanese terms. This end is not yet attained, since a large Russian army encamps round the tombs of the Manchu dynasty and lies within pistol shot of Oyama's troops; it is not attained by the capture of a maritime fortress which contains no Russian ships worth troubling about, nor does a march on Kharbin necessarily entail the desired and final success, and least of all so long as the Russian army remains in being. Peace is to be found at Kuropatkin's headquarters and in the conning tower of Rozhdestvensky's flagship; there the Japanese must seek it, and there alone.

There are reasonable grounds for the belief that, if the Japanese concentrate every rifle they can place in the field on the Shaho and in adjacent or even distant but decisive positions before their enemy is capable of effecting a retreat after the thaw, they can fight and hope to win a decisive battle. That is the objective and on land there is no other, for there has never yet been discovered a means for concluding honourable peace with a resolute enemy save that of making war so costly and disastrous to him that he can think of no way of continuing the campaign with hope of success.

It is not improbably true that the Japanese army ardently desires to march on Kharbin, and it is also certainly the fact that the wishes of an army which has done and suffered so much deserve consideration only second to that allowed to the interests of Japan. The march must be prepared, rails, rolling stock, and engineering plant must be ready to hand, magazines must be full, and transport massed betimes, while the number of horsemen must be largely increased in view

of the possible expansion and the changing character of the area of future operations. Thirty thousand hard-bitten, fast-riding mounted men, of the type we had in the field at the end of our last war, could destroy Kuropatkin's army in May, if intelligently organised and let loose under young and dashing commanders.

But, while all must be in readiness for a march on Kharbin, the advantage Japan has gained from the limitation of the area of hostilities to a narrower zone near her sea-bases has given her such marked and tremendous leverage upon events that she would be wise to make certain that any operations of *grande envergure* she may have in mind are indispensable for the destruction of the Russian army, and that they really aim at that result and no other. Japan, in short, must fix her eyes and concentrate her attention upon Kuropatkin's army to the absolute exclusion of all secondary, complementary, or ulterior objects, since all the cherries will fall into her lap when the trunk of the tree is cut through. This task is not light, since no one has ever yet encountered, and still less defeated, 800,000 Russians on the field of battle, and we should not be sorry to see a little more appreciation in Japan of the severity of the ordeal which is now impending.

Certainly, there are many secondary operations which are possible on land as on sea, and they are even advisable, provided full provision for the main effort has first been made. The attack upon the Russian communications is of this character, and certain acts are permissible at Vladivostok of a nature to supplement and complete the naval preparations and eventually to permit the prosecution of a more considerable enterprise in case of need. But a repetition of Port Arthur at Vladivostok is needless unless Rozhdestvensky aspires to meet the fate that befell his comrades of the First Pacific Squadron: in any other event there is nothing in Vladivostok worth the bones of a son of Japan. What does Japan want with Russian prisoners? She

has a couple of army corps of them already, and they are expensive to keep. It is true that in the event of a march on Kharbin it may be advisable to open the shorter line of rail to the sea in order to utilise a second railway which may be required to maintain a large army at Kharbin, and it is obvious that the terminus of this line is within the fortress on the Pacific shore. But it will be a comparatively simple matter to establish a Japanese base in some bay adjacent to Vladivostok, to drive eventually the Russian garrison into their works and shut them up, and then to construct a deviation of the railway avoiding the defended area and joining the existing line inland. Vladivostok can be left to starve in peace, and whether it holds out or surrenders is a matter of no moment. It will serve as a magnet, as Port Arthur served, to attract Russian armies and fleets, and can be relied on in the same manner to do the utmost harm to the Russian cause proportionate with its means of defence.

We have some proof that the detestable influence of fortresses is already, or rather once more, exercising a preponderating weight upon Russian military plans. Here, for example, is a prominent military critic, General Masloff, of the Russian General Staff, writing that nothing short of irreparable disaster will drive the Russians out of Mukden. He says: "The issue will remain undecided so long as our army bars the enemy's progress. Under cover of this host we can proceed to strengthen our position in and around Vladivostok, which will become vulnerable the day we fall back upon Kharbin. That is why we must hold Mukden at all costs." It is not possible more completely to invert the *rôle* of armies and fortresses than by this deliberate declaration that the first exist for the benefit and protection of the second. If we required any more proof that even the most horrible experience is lost upon an army that is incapable of reflection, General Masloff would have provided it for us.

It is certain that if these ideas represent Russian

intentions, Japan should gain nothing but profit, and that she should be able to direct her new armies in such manner as to make the great battle round Mukden not only decisive but perhaps conclusive. If, on the other hand, Japan fritters away her strength upon a siege of Vladivostok, excursions upon the Amur, or expeditions against Sakhalin, before she has settled affairs with Kuropatkin, of what profit will these be to her if the main stroke fails? For our part we may note without comment that the Russian estimate of the Japanese forces in Manchuria makes the total 384,000, but we have not as yet seen any signs that the Russians understand the new dispositions recently made in Japan, or appreciate their significance, their scope, or their objective.

It is clear that all secondary operations must be strictly subordinated to success in the main effort, and if it is plainly necessary to prepare for the possible expansion of the theatre of war, it is also permissible, and indeed highly desirable, for political as well as military reasons, to endeavour to restrict it to the *champs clos* round Mukden and to compel the Russians to fight to a finish where they stand. Certain hard and even unpalatable facts have to be faced and military measures devised to accord with them. It is not in Japan's power to dictate peace to Russia if that Power desires to prolong the war. No country can impose peace, on its own terms, upon an enemy until that enemy is prostrate with the sword at its throat. Japan can never conquer Russia, consequently she can never impose terms which Russia's pride forbids her to accept. Similarly Russia, in her opinion, has little hope of ultimate victory, and none at all of signing peace as victor at Tokio in the manner demanded by the *Invalid* with such astonishing levity at the outbreak of war. Japan is invulnerable to Russia's blows, just as we were to the blows of Philip of Spain, Louis XIV., and Napoleon, and for almost similar reasons.

From these things it follows that, if peace is desired,

recognition of the essential elements of the general situation by both belligerents is the inevitable prelude, and that, as it is inevitable, it may as well come soon as late. But if peace is not desired by Russia, then it becomes advisable for Japan not to occupy one foot of ground more than she can defend without undue strain, and defend for long, and not to chase will-o'-the-wisps into the far interior with the underlying, if unconfessed, thought—Here Russia will make peace. It is necessary to consider that this fallacious thought proved the perdition of Napoleon and of the finest army that ever was assembled for war in modern times, and that the fallacy was due to Napoleon's inability to understand the character of Alexander and to measure correctly the fortitude of the Russian people. The only safe plan is to govern Japanese strategy by the thought that Russia will never make peace; then, at least, there will be no disappointment.

It may, and indeed it does, seem most unjust that the onus of upholding a cause which is that of the civilised world should devolve upon the gallant people of certain small islands in the far Pacific, but thrice armed is he whose cause is just, and a similar duty has devolved upon us in the past when our population was far less numerous than that of Japan and our enemies more powerful than hers to-day. Japan, moreover, has an advantage we never possessed—namely, a friend strong enough to ward off hostile combinations and leave her face to face with a single enemy. That, and nothing else, has been the true foundation upon which all Japan's successes have been built. In order to realise her aspirations Japan has to prove to Russia that the latter cannot maintain an army in East Asia which Japan cannot defeat. When indubitable proof has been given of that fact—and some proof has been given already—peace is the necessary and logical consequence sooner or later. The lasting character of such peace has its best assurance in the preservation or extension of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance after the

war, but if the settlement also secures some valid international sanction and guarantee, then so much the better for the good relations of all Great Powers and the peace of the Far East.

But if Japan has thus yet to crown her victories and to redouble her efforts in order more rapidly and effectually to compass her ends, it is also true that much of a permanent character has already been achieved. Japan has taken her rightful place among the nations, and even the greatest and most ambitious of military states will think twice before again molesting her and stirring up such a nest of hornets. A long era of peace for Japan will be the certain reward of her great sacrifices, and, truly, no nation will ever more richly have deserved it.

CHAPTER XLIII

THE BATTLE OF MUKDEN

IN the middle of February, 1905, the Russian forces still occupied those positions on the Shaho and round Mukden which they had held during the preceding five months. Mukden had been transformed into the advanced base of operations for the intended march on Liauyang ; important reinforcements had arrived, and confidence had to a great extent revived. It was said at Mukden, as at Liauyang, that " Mukden will be our tomb : we will die rather than retreat," and almost every single military attaché and correspondent with the Russian army considered the Russian position inexpugnable.

The First Manchurian Army held the sector between the Kaotuling defile and Putiloff Hill. General Linievitch's command included the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Siberian Army Corps and the 1st European Army Corps, with headquarters at Kandolisan, Koalinzai, Kuanshan, and Dadziapou respectively : the headquarters of this army were at Kuanshan. At Tsinkhechen there was a detachment under General Alexeieff, including a brigade of infantry and a body of Cossacks. The front occupied by this army extended for about twenty-five miles. On the extreme left at Sinzintin, General Masloff disposed of a brigade of reserve battalions together with mounted partisans under Colonel Madritoff.

The Third Manchurian Army, under General Bilder-

ling, occupied the centre of the Russian position and a front of seven and a half miles from Putiloff Hill to Linshinpu and the village of Vutchjanin. Bilderling's headquarters were Suiatun station on the railway, and his four army corps, namely, the 5th and 6th Siberian, and 16th and 17th European, had their centres at Tasiadopu, Kusantun, Baitapu and Kulutse respectively, the 16th Corps forming the reserve.

The Second Army, under General Kaulbars, had been reinforced since the Battle of Heikautai by the 1st Siberian Army Corps, and included this corps, the 8th and 10th European Corps, and a mixed command made up of the three rifle brigades which had reached the theatre of war. Army headquarters were at Maturan. The troops held the line Sandioza-Siaokhantaitse to the Hun River and thence to Siaolipuza. The army corps headquarters were at Shuango, Maturan, Dachuanho, and Siaolipuza respectively.

The right flank of the whole line was guarded by General Rennenkampf's cavalry, while, in the Liau Valley, Tolmatcheff's detachment, previously commanded by Kossagovsky, continued the chain to the village of Syfantai.

Excluding the flank detachments at Syfantai, Tsinkhechen and Sinzintin, the front of the armies measured forty-four miles, and the depth five to six miles. At Mukden, besides, there were six march-detachments; at Tieling the 9th Rifle Regiment and six companies of the 6th Regiment; while units of the frontier guards held the line of rail. On the positions occupied by the Second and Third Armies there were siege-guns and howitzers on siege mountings brought up by rail from Vladivostok: they were without teams or travelling carriages, but along the front a line of rail had been laid connecting the battery positions, and horse traction was used for the movement of material.¹

Immediately before the Japanese advance the 16th

¹ These details of the Russian positions are taken from the *Russkoe Slovo*. For details of troops *vide* Appendix B.

Army Corps and the 72nd Division were detached from the Third Army to act as general reserve under the hand of General Kuropatkin, whose headquarters were at Sahetun in the sector held by the Third Army. A brigade of the 41st Division and two regiments of Cossacks had also been withdrawn on account of Japanese attempts on the line of communications, and took no part in the action. The Japanese raid¹ which was responsible for this detachment left the Japanese lines on January 9 and, traversing the 300 miles of circuitous roads which led to its objective 160 miles north of Mukden, reached Tsinkai north of Changchun on February 11. Here it blew up a bridge, and, after driving away a superior force of Russians and capturing a gun, returned safely on March 13. This remarkable feat well deserved the *Kanjo*, or honorary distinction, which was awarded to those who took part in it, namely, Major Naganuma, Captains Asano and Nakaya, and 150 picked men of four regiments. From the despatches of Kuropatkin and Sakharoff dated February 16 and 17 it is to be observed that the force was put down by the Russians at six squadrons of cavalry, four companies of infantry, and 2,000 Hunhutzers.

The views which the Russian commander-in-chief entertained of the general situation at this culminating period of his career, and of the fortunes of the armies of Manchuria, have not as yet been given to the world. It is alleged by the Russian press that Kuropatkin was meditating the offensive, and that his intention was to have begun his advance on February 22, a date altered to February 25 on the demand of General Kaulbars. There was, however, nothing in his dispositions to indicate the intention to attack, and still less the direction to be given to such effort. The deployment of his armies was essentially defensive, and so it remained until his intention to attack, if he ever entertained it, was anticipated by the advance of the Japanese troops.

¹ A very full and interesting account of this raid, by the Tokio correspondent of *The Times*, appeared in that paper on May 18.

Never, at any previous period of the war, had the Russians been so confident and so strong. According to the Japanese estimate, Kuropatkin had 376 battalions, 171 batteries, and 178 squadrons, representing 300,000 rifles, 26,000 sabres and 1,368 guns, while the defences behind which these troops were sheltered were of the most elaborate character, and superior to anything that the Japanese had encountered during the previous battles of the field campaign.

Up to the battle of Heikautai, Kuropatkin had been confronted by only three armies, namely the First, Second and Fourth, under Generals Kuroki, Oku and Nodzu respectively. In the middle of February these numbered three, four and two divisions respectively, but to these had been added a considerable number of reserve brigades, exact details of which have not yet been published, bringing up the average strength of most of the divisions to 22,000 or 25,000 men. But there were, besides these three armies, two others in the field, namely the Third, under General Nogi, consisting of four divisions, and the Fifth, under General Kawamura, and nothing definite was known at Kuropatkin's headquarters of the strength and situation of these forces.

The apparent preference of the Japanese for hill fighting, and their superiority in mountain artillery and coolie transport, led Kuropatkin to the belief that when the Japanese attacked they would once more assail his left. Other circumstances conspired to strengthen this belief, which was one that the Japanese Staff desired that their enemy should entertain. Neither Gripenberg's action at Heikautai, nor Mishchenko's raid towards Niuchwang, had encountered Nogi's army, and all the indications pointed to a more or less defensive attitude by the Japanese left. Marshal Oyama was presumed to wish to avoid the low country, owing to the numerical superiority of the Russian horsemen, and the excellence of the Russian field guns. Colonel Gädke, before his return from the front, no doubt reflected the general belief in anticipating that Nogi's

men would be sent to the Japanese right: the extension of the Russian left to Tsinkhechen and Tita gave further proof that the main anxieties of the Russian commander were directed to this flank.

Moreover there were vague rumours that a fresh army had left Japan, and suspicions that it had landed near the Yalu and was marching towards Shingking. This army, as originally formed, was composed of twenty-six regiments distributed into six and a half divisions, and was created by the incorporation of those solid reserve elements which had become available owing to the change in the Japanese recruiting law during the year 1904. This army left Japan towards the end of January, and not a word concerning its strength, position, or movements, save the idlest rumours, was published by the press of the world until the battle of Mukden had begun. Even now the story of the co-operation of this army in the battle remains to be told, since all that is known is that a certain number of the units composing it, possibly amounting to three divisions, took effective share in the action; but whether the difficulties of the march from the Yalu northward, or the necessity for creating a general reserve under Oyama's hand, or some other cause, prevented the deployment of the whole strength of this army on the Japanese right at the critical moment cannot even now be stated with certainty.

If a doubt remains as to Kuropatkin's intention to attack, there is none at all as to the Japanese plan. The five armies now concentrated within striking distance of the enemy were numerically superior to him. It is probable that they numbered about 400,000 men, numbers not indeed overwhelming in view of the strength of the Russian position, but sufficient, after all that had passed, to promise a decisive victory if the initiative remained with Japan. The Japanese Staff decided to strike at the moment when the extreme severity of the winter had passed, but before the thaw, which might be expected by March 7 to 14, rendered

the rivers impassable owing to the melting of the ice and the country difficult for the movement of guns. The decision contained an element of risk, since a premature thaw during the progress of the battle, or unexpected delays, might find the armies committed to operations they could not complete.

The plan was for Kawamura to open the ball on the extreme right and to march upon Machuntun and Tita, turning and throwing back the Russian left. It was anticipated that a strong attack on this line would confirm Kuropatkin in his reading of the situation and attract the Russian reserves to this side. When this movement had been allowed time to effect its preliminary purpose, General Kuroki was to push forward his right so as to unite with and protect Kawamura's left, while, in order to shepherd the Russians into a more restricted space, it was also necessary that Kuroki should attack with vigour the highlands north of Penhsihu, where formidable entrenchments, strongly held, barred his path.

In the centre of the Japanese line, General Nodzu was allotted a more or less defensive rôle. The Japanese fortifications in this quarter were as solid as the Russian, and here were massed a large number of heavy guns ready to open when battle was fairly joined. Nodzu acted as the pivot for the two encircling arms of the line of battle, and, in view of the defences he occupied and the formidable character of the Japanese park of artillery, there was very little danger that a Russian counter-attack at this point would pierce the front of battle. The security offered by this solid position meant much to the Japanese armies.

To the Second Army more active work was given. This army was to take up the advance when the troops upon its right were all launched or engaged upon their several tasks. Its duty then was to undertake a series of hard-hitting attacks upon the railway, and west of it to the Hun and beyond, with the object of pressing back the Russian right on the south and south-west of

Mukden, and of driving it from the important entrenchments which had been constructed on this side. Oku's attack had the appearance of an attack upon the flank: it was calculated to attract upon itself such hostile forces as the other armies had not drawn towards them, and thus to absorb and use up the Russian reserves. It was necessary that it should have an uncompromising character and be directed with inflexible resolution: both troops and commander were eminently fitted for this serious mission.

To Nogi's men of the Fourth Army was allotted the decisive attack. Under cover of the smoke and heat generated by the engagement of the other armies on an immense front, and specially covered by the violent activity of the Second Army, Nogi was to march in *échelon* of columns from his left on a wide circling movement; to sweep up the Liao Valley, and bend eastward and descend upon Mukden from the west and north-west, giving the finishing blow of this gigantic encounter, severing the enemy's main line of retreat, and forcing him to choose between surrender and ignominious flight. To launch, direct, and support 400,000 men engaged at such a season over a front 100 miles in length, was one of the most remarkable tasks ever undertaken on the field of battle by a modern staff. Wisely remaining at a point well in rear of the army, but linked up with every column by telegram and telephone, Oyama, Kodama, and their staff were uninfluenced by the emotions of the battlefield, and were able to direct the whole course of the battle with frigid precision and all the desirable calm.

The first move in this great series of operations lay with Kawamura, who advanced in two columns on February 19, his right taking the road to Tita, and his left that to Machuntun. On the 20th and 21st the Russian scouts were driven in, while on the 22nd the right column drove a Russian detachment from an entrenched position and began its march to Tita, the left column meanwhile preparing to attack Tsinkhechen, held by

General Alexeieff with sixteen battalions and twenty guns. On the morning of February 23 a heavy snowfall obscured the view, while the ice on the Taitse began to melt: operations thereby became difficult, and the precipitous nature of the ground made progress slow. Nevertheless the Japanese pushed up to within 1,000 yards of the position and opened their attack against the front and left of the Russian force. Alexeieff's troops resisted stoutly in a strong position, which had been elaborately fortified, and Kawamura was compelled to postpone the decision till the following morning. At dawn, on February 24, the attack was resumed. A field battery was brought up to a hill south-west of Tsinkhechen, and sixteen mountain guns opened fire from a point south-east of Asiakhechau, while an advance took place against the Russian right at the Tantsiling Pass. By 1 p.m. the Russians were forced to evacuate Beresneff Hill after a bayonet fight, the Japanese advancing over ground covered with surface-mines and obstructed by wire entanglements. The Russians finally broke at 6 p.m. and retired northward in disorder, leaving 150 dead in the position and three machine-guns; their total losses were estimated at 1,000 men. Marshal Oyama's instructions were that all columns should pursue a defeated enemy with the utmost vigour, therefore on February 25 the advance was resumed, and by the 28th the two Japanese columns approached Tita and Machuntun, driving the enemy before them.

General Kuroki, in his turn, moved out on February 24, and began to push the Russians from their positions at Tsensukiahotse, Tengyenling, and Pawichi. Along the front of Nodzu's army the cannonade began, and the evidence that a battle of a decisive character was impending was made clear to the Russian headquarters.

The Kaotuling defile, which was next attacked by the First Army, was held by General Daniloff and the regiments of the 6th East Siberian Division. The nature

of the Japanese attacks and the large numbers somewhat ostentatiously displayed by the assailants, still more confirmed Kuropatkin in his original impressions. On the evening of February 25 he ordered the 1st Siberian Army Corps to march from Shuango to Kwanshan, that is to say from the right of the position to the left, while Rennenkampf was also called up from the extreme right and sent away to restore order in Alexeieff's command and redress the balance of the fighting. The 1st Siberians left their bivouacs on the night of February 25, and marching throughout the day of the 26th reached Kwanshan on the 27th, while Rennenkampf succeeded for the time in arresting Kawamura's advance on the position of Madziadian. It is supposed that part of the 16th Army Corps was also sent eastward at this time.

On March 1 Kuroki occupied the high ground east of Kaotuling and seized the enemy's position in rear of Chingkau, while the following day Kawamura defeated a number of counter-attacks and began to press back the Russians to their main positions at Tita and Machuntun where an energetic resistance was encountered, and for a time no headway could be made. On March 3 the Guards Division of the First Army attacked Kandolisan several times, but was finally repulsed at 4 a.m. on March 4. On the 6th, however, Kuroki's right column occupied the heights south of Paitzukou, pushing the enemy towards Sankiutse, while the previous night a Russian counter-attack in front of Kaotuling was repulsed. The general effect of all these movements of the armies under Kawamura and Kuroki was to drive in the Russian left, and to place the Japanese in a favourable position north of the Shaho for co-operation with a general northward advance. The defence of the First Manchurian Army had been creditable, and, aided by their reinforcements, they had been able to show a determined front to the two eastern armies.

General Nodzu's army, although sharing in the

general movement northward to a slight extent, and thereby occupying the attention of the enemy in their front, only began to take serious part in the action on February 27, when a furious cannonade was opened and was soon responded to from the Russian front, where 300 guns were in position. This duel continued during the two following days, when the Russians were driven out of Liuchangtun and Wanpaoshan and lost their last foothold south of the Shaho. The Fourth Army had now completed its preliminary mission, and waited the result of the turning movements before sharing in the general advance.

Meanwhile General Oku had moved out on February 27, and the following day began to advance between the Shaho and the Hun and along the west bank of the latter river. He encountered the fire of twenty-eight Russian batteries on the east bank of the Hun south of Changtan, four of these being armed with guns of position, and his advance was momentarily checked, while he was subjected at night to a fierce counter-attack which was pressed home but ultimately driven back. On March 1 the Second Army swept forward on a broader front and drove the Russians from their positions. Pursuing with vigour, Oku took Wukiatzu and Choukaupan on March 2, occupied Suhupan, where large captures of material were made, and at length, on March 6, held the line from Likwanpan through Shatatan and Machiapu to Paitapou, threatening to outflank the Russian position in the Shaho Valley, but being at this point brought up by superior numbers in strong defences.

Meantime the decisive attack had been launched and had proceeded unchecked upon its sweeping movement. After a march of 30 miles from points on the railway south of the Second Army, General Nogi reached the line Shwangshu-Pienlima on February 27, covering the ground between the Liau and the Hun. On February 28 this army covered 20 miles and on March 1 25 miles, when the cavalry, which was

marching at the head of the échelon of divisions from the left, entered Hsinmintun unopposed. Swinging round on a broad front, Nogi was soon in touch with Oku's left at Likwanpan, while his own left extended due north to Tashihchiao, 15 miles west of Mukden on the Hsinmintun road.

These threatening movements, and the failure of the European Rifles to withstand Oku's impetuous advance, obliged General Kaulbars to evacuate his positions about Sandioza. On March 2 all the siege guns in battery at Siaokhantaitse, Sandioza and Kaulinpu were taken by the horse railway from Davaganpan to Suiatun, whence they were despatched by the railway to the north. This withdrawal of an important element of the defence of the Russian positions left Kuropatkin's army at a great disadvantage against the heavy metal of the Japanese, part of which followed Oku and supported him. Before the dangerous and enveloping attack of the now combined Second and Third Japanese Armies, the Second Manchurian Army was forced to retreat. The 8th Army Corps and the European Rifle Corps fell back on Mamkhouza and Kudiasa and the 10th Army Corps on Machiapu, these movements being covered by the 15th Division.

In order to meet Nogi's attack, which by virtue of its weight and the unexpected direction of its march disorganised the Russian dispositions, various units of the 25th Division of the 16th Army Corps, or general reserve, were now sent to Salinpu and Tashihchiao, while the six march-battalions from Mukden were taken by Colonel Tapolsky to Padiatse. Birger's brigade of the 41st Division had before this been sent to Pandiatun, but was now compelled to fall back on a position near Santaitse. From this moment to the close of the action a desperate struggle was carried on upon the line to which the Second Manchurian Army had been thrown back.

Kuropatkin had been slow to recognise the character of his enemy's plan. It was only on March 1

that he first mentioned that "offensive movements have been discovered in the Hun and Liau Valleys towards the north," while the following day, at the close of a telegram, he remarked that "the offensive on the Liau continues and measures have been taken against a turning movement." On the 3rd he made no reference to the turning movement, and it was not till the 4th that he again alluded to "the advanced guard of the enemy who is surrounding our right flank." Nevertheless on the 5th he was able to say that "the front at Mukden is calm," a remark which may have been intended to soothe anxious minds at home, but certainly bore little relation to the truth of the situation.

The position of the Russian right was indeed extremely grave, and Kuropatkin had already recalled the 1st Siberian Army Corps from its excursion to the east. These troops reached Mukden on March 5, and the 1st Division was at once sent on to Wangentun. At this moment the 9th Division of East Siberian Rifles constituted the only remaining reserve of the Second Manchurian Army.

Throughout the day of March 6 a combat of the utmost severity raged round Machiapu, where General Tserpitzky commanded mixed bodies of troops of the 10th and the Rifle Corps. From this village to Wangentun the Second Manchurian Army was now fighting in a state of hopeless disorganisation; regiments, divisions and army corps were intermingled and all tactical cohesion lost. There were no less than sixteen detachments fighting isolated actions in this part of the field, many of them having received special instructions direct from army headquarters. Several army corps commanders found themselves without troops and unable to exercise any control upon the course of the battle. This situation had been caused by the precipitate manner in which attempts had been made to stem an attack against which no antecedent precautions had been taken.

On March 7 Kaulbars still held firm, but Nogi had now extended on a semicircular front of fifteen miles and threatened to seize the railway and cut the Russian communications. The moment had arrived for a decisive effort to break this strangling line, and Kuropatkin issued orders for the concentration of ninety battalions at Tsuertun, intending to take personal command of a counter-attack on a grand scale the following day. As the Second Manchurian Army was fully committed and in the thick of the fight, Kuropatkin, in order to carry out his intention, now decided to repeat the Liauyang manœuvre, that is to say, to withdraw his southern front to the line of the Hun, to hold fast round Mukden, and to utilise part of the troops withdrawn from the Shaho for the purpose of bursting through Nogi's guard. The Third Manchurian Army was consequently ordered to fall back upon Yanzudianza and Mutchan, and the First upon Foulne and Fushun. These movements were to take place after dark on the night of March 7.

The armies under Bilderling and Linievitch received these orders with dismay. Unable at a distance to appreciate the gravity of the situation on the right, they only knew that for ten days or more they had resisted the attacks of three Japanese armies: they are said to have obeyed with indignation, and many with tears in their eyes. The movement was, however, performed steadily. At dawn on March 8 the Third Army reached the entrenched camp of Mukden: the 17th Army Corps was posted astride the Mandarin road, the 5th Corps to the west of it and the 6th to the east. But, owing to the severity of the fighting and the constant demands for reinforcements from all sides, these three army corps had dwindled down to twenty battalions in the 17th Corps, twelve in the 6th, and ten in the 5th. This army occupied the trenches that had been dug round Mukden, and prepared to receive rather than attack the enemy. The First Army also withdrew without being seriously interfered with: the

1st Army Corps reached Fouline, the 4th Kiusan, and the 2nd and 3rd Fushun. But Kuropatkin's grand attack with the ninety battalions never took place. The army was already disordered, and only sixteen battalions could be assembled for the desired stroke. Under these conditions nothing remained but to hold the positions occupied and to hope that the Japanese might be too exhausted to break through.

But the day of March 8 saw a great improvement in the Japanese position. Whether actually driven out or conforming with Linievitch's orders, the Russians retired from Machuntun at 8 a.m. and were promptly pursued towards Fushun. The First and Fourth Japanese Armies also saw the welcome signs of the retreat of the enemy in their front and took up the pursuit during the night of March 7. Instead of being able to rally north of the Hun and to recuperate for a fresh effort, as they had done north of the Taitse at Liauyang, the Russians found their enemy at their heels, forcing them across the river and following in pursuit. On the same day, General Oku, after a desperate struggle, burst through the chain of works to the south-west of Mukden, while Nodzu supported him on the right. Nogi on the left wrecked the Russian railway and began to extend more and more across the main line of the Russian retreat.

On March 9 a violent storm, with icy blasts and clouds of dust, prevented movements of importance round the town, but to eastward the Japanese closed in, Nodzu crossed the Hun, while the 4th Russian Army Corps gave way at Kiusan, and at 5 p.m. the sounds of firing immediately to the east of Mukden electrified the Russian headquarters and sounded the knell of the Russian hopes. The withdrawal of the sick and wounded and of the reserves of ammunition at Mukden began at once in a precipitate manner, and, having now no further hope of victory, Kuropatkin gave the order for a general retreat.

This order directed that the Second Manchurian

Army should retain its positions to cover the retreat; that the Third Army should take the road east of the railway, and that the Fouline-Mentangou road and others to the eastward should be used by the First Army. The irruption of the Japanese at Kiusan upset these plans, and forced the 1st Army Corps into the road allotted for the retreat of the 6th Corps of the Third Army. Inextricable confusion resulted, and the convoys fell into the hands of the Japanese.

The Third Manchurian Army was surprised by the order for retreat. The intention of its commander had been to make a general attack upon March 10, and dispositions had been made to this effect. The order for retreat, received at 10 p.m. on the 9th, was not credited when it came by telephone, and a written confirmation was demanded. When the retreat began the Third Army at first maintained some semblance of order, but the hopeless confusion on the crowded roads, the absence of all order, the jumble of men, horses, guns and waggons, and the constant panics engendered among the convoys by the fire of the Japanese who pursued a parallel march and fired into the flanks of the moving mass of fugitives, soon caused the retreat to degenerate into a disorderly rout. At Puho, where Nogi had posted troops across the line of retreat, and at Tava, carts, guns, and ammunition waggons crashed about in every direction in the wildest flight; fire was opened upon imaginary enemies, and the country was soon littered with the débris of the broken army. The Second Army fared even worse. All tactical control had been lost before the retreat began, and the army followed the stream of fugitives in mobs and groups as best it might. The Russian armies were scattered in the hills as sheep having no shepherd. Companies, battalions, regiments, and even brigades disappeared from the ken of their commanders and from each other, and even to this day no connected story has appeared to disclose the fortune or the fate of entire units of the Tsar's army. Linievitch alone,



GENERAL LINIEVITCH.



GENERAL BARON KITEN NOOI



The Battle of Mukden will remain for many a long year the subject of inquiry and discussion on the part of soldiers all the world over, and it will not be possible to form a final judgment upon the tactics of the battle until much more complete information is available than is yet at our disposal. Certain features, nevertheless, stand out in a prominent manner, and authorise some slight preliminary investigation.

The proximity of the two armies always offered an advantage to the side first ready to attack, and this advantage the Japanese seized and profited by. From the first day they dictated the whole course of the action, and imposed their will upon the enemy, causing him to follow their lead, and taking from him the power of dominating the situation. The psychology of the Russian commander was also a subject which the Japanese had thoroughly studied, and the plan of battle was admirably adopted to strengthen in him those convictions which the Japanese desired him to maintain. The deliberate manner in which the successive attacks were delivered, and the ample time allowed for each operation to be worked out and to affect the Russian dispositions, gave proof that the Japanese Staff had weighed every move, and had recognised, as they had never completely done before, the influence of their movements upon those of the enemy. Most important of all, they gave upon this occasion the necessary weight to the decisive attack, and by combining the action of the eight divisions and cavalry upon the critical operation of the battle, both deserved and won a handsome victory.

The purely defensive dispositions of the Russian commander deprived him of the power of taking full advantage of his position and numbers. The distribution of his troops among three armies, all of which occupied positions in the front line, was also highly disadvantageous for the exercise of initiative as the battle progressed. There was no reason why Kuropatkin should not have occupied his positions and still have

counter-attacks were delivered by subordinate commanders ; units of all sizes were withdrawn from the higher unit to which they belonged and sent hither and thither in aimless rambles, until the tactical unity of army corps and even armies was completely destroyed. It was owing to this fact that the Second Manchurian Army, and the reinforcements which reached it, became a tangle of mixed detachments, and from such a mob of armed men nothing could be hoped save immobile passive defence. The failure to assemble the 90 battalions for the projected counter-attack speaks volumes of the breakdown of the higher command.

Kuropatkin repeated once more the manœuvre of Liauyang, and once more it failed. There was much less hope that it should have succeeded. At Liauyang there was an unfordable river to hold off Oyama's pursuit, and the defences round the town of Liauyang could not be turned. At Mukden the river chosen as the second line of defence was frozen over, and though a partial thaw presented some difficulties to the Japanese pursuit the river was crossed and the Russian armies driven from the northern bank. Moreover, Mukden was already turned and the Japanese were across the Russian communications. It was not reasonable, under the conditions that prevailed, to expect to abandon the southern defences and employ the troops which had held them in a serious attack to the westward. Such act was the business of an adequate general reserve, and no such reserve had been assembled.

CHAPTER XLIV¹

CAUSE AND EFFECT

Now that the full consequences of the Japanese victory are known, it is well to examine the causes which have brought about the crushing defeat of the largest Russian army ever assembled for the purpose of war.

There are causes which are immediate, and there are causes which are remote, and the latter deserve precedence both in point of chronology and in point of importance. Russia has never recovered from the paralysing effect of the seizure of the first initiative by Japan. The resolution of the Japanese Government to break off negotiations, and to transfer the quarrel to another stage at the hour most suitable for the success of their arms, stands out as the initial cause of military success. From the effect of that surprise Russia has never recovered ; the initiative has remained throughout with Japan, and all that her enemy has been able to do during a year and a month of war has been to follow with humility the dictation of those who assumed and maintained the mastery upon events. When diplomatic presumption is added to military palsy, success in arms is not for mortals to command.

The first intention of the Russian Government was prudent and farseeing. Recognising their inferiority, they plainly declared on February 18 of last year that it was their intention to withdraw into the interior, and not to risk battle until their digestion was on a par with

¹ *The Times*, March 13, 1905.

their appetite. Well would it have been for the Russian people had the dispositions on the theatre of war conformed with this sane resolve. The decision, however, demanded a preliminary sacrifice from Russian vanity, and that sacrifice the Russian Government were not prepared to make; consequently, the entire project became null and of no effect.

Port Arthur, the unassailable bulwark, the impregnable fortress, was not abandoned. The garrison was, on the contrary, increased to wellnigh 50,000 men, including all sorts and conditions of men of the land and sea services, and for two months practically the entire energies of the Russian military and railway administrations were spent upon making good deficiencies in the fortress due to previous neglect. All strategic liberty for the field army was lost, and its action became dependent upon circumstances and events outside its own initiative and control. The Pacific squadron, thanks to astonishing absence of naval instinct, was relegated to the performance of duties usually committed to ancient monitors or the torpedo craft of a *défense mobile*.

The abasement of the art of naval war by Russian seamen and the Russian Government dragged down the Russian navy into unfathomable depths of humiliation. It was said and believed that the threat of a naval force, which was either afraid to show itself, or was more intent on retreat than victory when it ventured to leave port, would terrify the enemy, defend the coasts and the flanks of the army, and prevent invasion from over-sea. It was thought that menace not translated into acts would paralyse the enemy and forbid the accomplishment of a grand invasion. Vain hope! for all the preparations of Japan went steadily forward, with a perfectly just and prudent calculation of the real character of this threat and of the nature of the measures required to meet it.

The first weeks in May saw the whole strategic conception founded upon Port Arthur crumbled into dust.

Three Japanese armies were ashore, two inferior Russian forces were defeated, the garrison of Port Arthur was shut up for ever in its works. The consequences of the falling away from the initial idea were disastrous, and they have followed one by one like gloomy manifestations of some implacable destiny. Terrorised and incapable, the Russian navy cowered behind its batteries: the garrison of Port Arthur fought not for victory, but for glory; the army wrecked itself in one endeavour after another to undo the knot which its own government had deliberately tied.

When, at Liauyang, the Russian army allowed itself to be turned out of a strongly intrenched position by an inferior force, all hope was gone of restoring the fortunes of the campaign on land. For, unless the information at the disposal of the Tsar's Government was hopelessly at fault, it should at this time have been suspected, if not even ascertained, that Russia could not place an army in Southern Manchuria which Japan could not defeat; that the military value of the Russian army was in almost all respects inferior to that of its enemy; that the power of reinforcement and supply on the side of Russia was inadequate to her needs; that, in short, Russia required a large preponderance of force in order to anticipate victory; and that, in view of the patriotic resolution of the Japanese, and the capacity of expansion of their military organisation, the numbers of the Russian armies required to be so large that they promised to exceed not only the ability of Russian generals to lead, but also, and in due time, the power of the Russian administration to maintain.

It was certain that, when Port Arthur fell and Vladivostok became closely beset, the Trans-Siberian Railway would become overburdened, and that, even if Mukden could be preserved and Hsinmintun drawn upon for supplies from China, the question of the maintenance of a sufficiently numerous army in Manchuria promised to present insuperable difficulty. From these considerations, and from many others which all pointed

to the same conclusion, the best course for Russia appeared to be to make peace while her army was still intact, Port Arthur unsubdued, and the *valeur militaire* of Rozhdestvensky's squadron still guaranteed by an international board of admirals. Peace, or retreat to the interior, were the only alternatives. Peace, during the last quarter of 1904, might conceivably have been obtained on not unfavourable terms. Retreat, until winter closed its iron grip upon the armies and the land, was also within Russia's power to command.

But the question was not viewed in this light at the Russian capital. Nothing has been more astonishing—nothing, we may also say, of more dangerous augury for the future peace of the world—than the reiterated proofs we have received during the past year of the inconceivable military incompetence of those who pretend to speak and act for Russia. The House of Romanoff has become non-combatant, and its monumental ignorance of the art of war is consequently assured. Even priests and women fight for Russia, but Grand-Dukes stand aside. But we had the right to expect symptoms of sanity, and some measure of plain speaking, from the senior generals of the Tsar's army, who are suspected of education, have seen something of war, and have studied their profession in a serious manner. Such men exist, but have been silent; and such military opinions as we have been favoured with from time to time display such unreasoning presumption and deplorable ignorance of the elements of the art of war that they fill us with more alarm for Russia and for the future of the world's peace than do all the disasters of the fighting armies. It is ignorance, not knowledge, that is the great peace-breaker.

Caustic old Dragomiroff has alone given evidence of capacity and insight, as all admirers of his brilliant writings anticipated; but when his advice would have been of value it was "energetically repudiated," and when, half-way through the battle of Mukden, he was again called in and asked to devise a plan of retreat for the Russian army, we should, indeed, have been pleased

to hear the bitter satire with which he received the suggestion ; but the proposition itself was too much akin to the problem of belling the cat to make the wisdom of Russian mice of much practical value. Even Dragomiroff, bent on destroying our last cherished illusions, has allowed his notorious jealousy of Kuropatkin to outrun his intelligence, and has stated in the *Razviedchik* that General Gripenberg's recent indiscipline was the act of a good soldier and a good citizen. So Dragomiroff and Gripenberg stand behind the throne, and poor Kuropatkin can well judge the character of him that is likely to be whispered in the Imperial ear. Not a ray of sense or soldierly spirit or loyalty lights up these sombre scenes of vanity, fickleness, and self-deception.

In their astonishing conceptions, which took count of everything save facts, the Russian Government were aided and abetted by the German soldiers, who, whether from ignorance or malice, proceeded with one accord to fool their neighbours to the top of their bent. The German General Staff is a disciplined body ; it has one head and heart and brain. There is profit from the fact, and there is loss. When Petruchio says that the sun shines at midnight, or that a Russian ancient is a blooming maid, Katharina is absolutely positive of the fact. The unanimity is touching. No such crowning mercy as the absorption of Russia in a Far Eastern war has ever in modern days rejoiced the heart and lightened the burden of the German General Staff. The ever-present nightmare of a war on two fronts was removed. The word went round, and no effort was spared to encourage the Russians to persevere in their foolish adventure. If France, wise in season, had abandoned colonial adventure, it was all the more important that her ally should begin. Did Russian generals require advice ? It was at their disposal gratis, and had the particular merit that it was always of the most flattering character. The mirror was held up, but not to nature. Did Stössel want a geegaw ? There was the first

Prussian Order at his hand to produce at his Court of Inquiry as an extenuating circumstance for surrender. Did Russia want guns, ammunition, shells, torpedo craft, engines, carriages, or cash? The German was willing and ready to profit by lucrative friendship, and he was perfectly within his rights. Was the Baltic Fleet unable to proceed? Here was a whole fleet of colliers at their command, and even the best of German ocean greyhounds, at a price, to encourage Russia to venture out from the German Baltic with every single warship that could float. What if they never came back? What was Hecuba to us?

Full of belief in herself, Russia proceeded to chase the chimera of her great historic mission, defined in his manifesto¹ of March 3 by the Tsar as the command of the waters of the Pacific Ocean in the interest of Christian nations throughout the ages, a definition which is such

¹ The text of the manifesto was as follows:—

“An inscrutable Providence has been pleased to visit our Fatherland with heavy trials. A bloody war in the Far East, the honour of Russia, and the command of the waters of the Pacific Ocean, so urgently necessary for the consolidation of the peaceful prosperity not only of our own, but also of other Christian nations throughout the ages, have imposed a great strain upon the strength of the Russian people and swallowed up many dear victims near to our heart. While the glorious sons of Russia are fighting with self-sacrificing bravery and risking their life for faith, for Tsar, and for country, disturbances have broken out in our country itself, to the joy of our enemies and to our own deep sorrow. Blinded by pride, the evil-minded leaders of the revolutionary movement make insolent attacks on the Holy Orthodox Church and the lawfully established pillars of the Russian State, thinking that by severing the natural connexion with the past they will destroy the existing order of the State and set up in its place a new administration on a foundation not suitable to our Fatherland.

“The outrage upon the Grand Duke Serge, who ardently loved the first capital of the Empire, and who came to his end in the midst of the sacred monuments of the Kremlin, deeply shocks the national feeling of every one to whom the honour of the Russian name and the renown of his home are dear. We humbly bear the trials sent us by Providence, and derive strength and consolation from our firm trust in the grace which God has always shown to the Russian power and from the immemorial devotion which we know our loyal people entertain for the Throne. With the help of the prayers of the Holy Orthodox Church, under the banner of the autocratic might of the Tsar, Russia has already frequently passed through great wars and disturbances, always issuing from her troubles and difficulties with fresh and unbending strength. Nevertheless, the recent internal disorder and the instability of thought which have favoured the spread of revolt and disturbances make it our duty to remind all those in Government institutions and all authorities of the duties of their office and of their service oath, and to call upon them to

an unsurpassable gem of Imperial condescension that we can half forgive the hecatombs which accompanied its birth. Kuropatkin was first ordered to stand fast at Mukden, and then to assume the offensive and relieve Port Arthur, while the Baltic Fleet set out upon its quest with all the pomp and panoply, and even a very colourable imitation, at our expense, of the circumstance of war.

Thrown back from the Japanese lines with a loss of 60,000 men, the army did all that patriotism and bravery demanded. Port Arthur was doomed, and in due course ships, forts, and garrison became prize of war. Nothing else could have been expected, since all these spoils were deliberately presented to Japan by reason of the only serious exercise of initiative that Russia allowed herself throughout the war—the decision, namely, to do nothing at all. But Port Arthur fell in midwinter, and Kuropatkin, whether of his own act or by order, was still clinging to Mukden, owing to some extraordinary play of Russian fancy that passes for the exercise of reason. It was necessary to maintain the guard over the tombs of the Manchu dynasty; it was necessary to impress the Chinese, most of whom were quite unaware that a war was in progress at all; and it was necessary—or, at least, so General Masloff says, and he ought to know—

display increased solicitude in the safe-guarding of law, order, and security, in the firm consciousness of their moral responsibility as servants of the Throne and the Fatherland.

“Thinking unceasingly of the welfare of our people and firmly trusting that God, after He has tried our patience, will give victory to our arms, we appeal to right-minded people of all classes to join us, each in his calling and in his place, in single-minded co-operation by word and deed in the great and sacred task of overcoming the stubborn foreign foe, and of eradicating revolt at home, and in wise efforts to check internal confusion. We wish to remind every one in this connexion that only if there is tranquillity of mind throughout the whole population is it possible to realise our aims for a renewal of the quiet life of the people, the strengthening of its prosperity, and the perfecting of the administration of the State. Let all those rally round the Throne who, true to Russia's past, honestly and conscientiously have a care in accord with ourselves for every affair of the State. May God send down on the clergy holiness, on those in authority justice and truth, on the people peace, on the laws power, and on faith strength to the consolidation of the autocracy and the welfare of our dear subjects.

“NICHOLAS.”

"not to leave Mukden without an irreparable diaster," since there was another fortress called Vladivostok which the Japanese would surely attack, unless the Russians committed the final act of strategical *harakiri* at Mukden with decency and despatch. For these presumed good and sufficient reasons, therefore, Kuropatkin sat at the window of his *wagon lit* and told his staff sad stories of the deaths of Manchu kings, until such time as the Japanese were ready to play their humble part in that irreparable disaster which Russian generals demanded with loud cries.

Heikautai was a mere interlude, a *fantasia* which the pianist Sakharoff would not accompany and in which that accomplished violinist General Bilderling refused to handle his bow. It was only one more proof of the indiscipline of Kuropatkin's orchestra and of the incapacity of its conductor. Gripenberg is said to boast that he possesses an order from Kuropatkin asking him to discover the situation of the chief masses of the Japanese forces. Gripenberg, to make up for the failure of intelligence, fought a battle with one-third of the Russian host against, for all he knew, the entire Japanese army. No motive, as the reporters say after a suicide, can be assigned for this rash act. He discovered nothing ; when he got into difficulties Kuropatkin refused to move a finger to help him, and the only result was the loss of a great number of men and the accustoming to defeat of all the Russian units that had not yet tasted it. The Russian army returned to its burrows, and there the Russian bear, as is its wont, curled itself up to sleep until some one came along again to arouse it.

Port Arthur was the initial cause for the encampment of the Russian armies round Mukden, and Vladivostok the initial cause for their remaining there. The military attachés with Kuropatkin were granted their winter's leave and asked to return in April, when the Russian commander proposed to renew the campaign at his own good will and pleasure, as soon as the climate became nice and mild. Till then the shutters were put

up and the armies of Manchuria were closed for alterations and repairs.

With armies in such close contact the initiative in battle was of overwhelming importance. We must all have felt it, even though not a word has been said. Every one knew that for months past Japan had been swarming with new levies; every one knew that for eight or nine weeks before the battle of Mukden masses of troops had been arriving at the front; had we been Russia's ally we would have advertised the fact in the agony column of *The Times*. Every one knew almost the exact dates on which the Russian reinforcements would appear; that the 4th Army Corps on March 1 was still west of Baikal and the two rifle brigades still in the neighbourhood of Kharbin. Every one, at least, except the Russian General Staff, which we cannot honestly convict of ever knowing anything at all.

Did Kuropatkin expect Oyama to ask him to review the Japanese levies and accept a field-state of their strengths as a token of his esteem? Did he expect that his enemy would wait until a Russian bugler was ordered to sound the advance, until Conductor Kuropatkin tapped his music-stand and held up his hand? Even when the action was first engaged, Kuropatkin, with all his enormous force, made the worst possible use of it. If the parapets held firm, the Japanese retired in peace to reconsider their attack; if the parapets fell, the Russians waddled back to look for others. Reserves were expended at every point which the Japanese indicated to their enemy by an expenditure of ammunition, and by the time March 1 came round and the main columns of attack were launched upon their impetuous course, Kuropatkin was taken entirely off his guard, was outflanked, surrounded, and overwhelmed. Not once in all the long battle did the Russian commander make any timely effort to control and dominate the situation; from first to last he was as wax in the hands of the enemy. Troops, guns, priests, ikons, women—all became involved in one disorderly rout.

No one can deny the immense difficulties which have beset Kuropatkin from first to last. The dissensions among his generals, the inferiority of his troops, the obstacles to movement, intelligence, and supply, the hostility of the Chinese, and the total absence of any real enthusiasm on the part of the Russian people in the war, must all be recognised as extenuating circumstances. But strategy has to take count not only of material, but also of moral forces, and to frame dispositions accordingly. Opinions differ as to the responsibility for the retention of Mukden after the loss of the battle of the Shaho. On whosoever head the responsibility lies, it is great, since it was then superlatively obvious that a retreat into the interior was imperatively demanded in order to escape a great catastrophe, which was in course of preparation in every town and camp and barrack of Japan. It was known to all the world, Tsarskoe Selo excepted, that Japanese preparations exceeded all that Russia could do by way of reply; but, misled by her Grand Dukes, her Masloffs, Sakharoffs, Sukhomlinoffs, and their apparently blind but excessively wideawake German guides, Russia left her army stranded on the Manchurian shore, to be overwhelmed by the flowing tide of Japanese patriotism.

It is well for an army never to know when it is beaten, and the grey-coated Russian soldier has once more, as always, snatched blood-stained laurels even from defeat; but generalship has a higher mission than the display of animal courage and obstinacy, and in everything that concerns the higher direction of policy and of war the failure of military Russia has passed all knowledge.

It is impossible to close this survey without a tribute of sincere admiration to the great plan of battle with which Marshal Oyama and his talented Headquarter Staff accomplished the destruction of the Russian army. They had profited by the past, and their plan for the enveloping attack upon the enemy will stand for generations as a model of one of the fine arts of

war. The plan was based on a correct appreciation of the temperament of Kuropatkin, of the fighting powers of his troops, and of the influence of each move upon Russian decisions. It was scientific in conception, soaring in ambition, and took into account the physical characteristics of the battlefield, the condition of the seasons, and the retaining power of modern firearms in the hands of trained soldiers under capable leadership. It was established upon the correct political perception that nothing short of a conclusive result would meet the requirements of Japan; but it is seldom indeed that a more or less impersonal syndicate, like a modern general staff, can rise to the giddy heights of an absolutely Napoleonic improvisation. The sacred fire is not often found in bulk.

The execution was in every way worthy of the brilliancy of the plan. Every single Japanese soldier appeared to realise the particular part he was to play in a great national drama, and he played it with all his might. If there be other nations who think they can deal so roughly with a Russian host, let them first produce for our inspection statesmen, sailors, and soldiers to equal those of Japan!

The crowning victory of Mukden was won, first and foremost, because the statesmen of Japan had the spirit and the backbone to declare war at their own hour; it was won because Japan was united in the attainment of national aims and shrank from no sacrifice to secure it; because the moral forces within the nation doubled and trebled material strength; because all was prepared, weighed, studied, known; because the shortcomings of the enemy, which were many, were recognised and profited by; because a general staff, framed on the best existing model, was able to direct all forces to a common end; because each soldier and seaman knew and understood the part he had to play, and played it whole-heartedly for his country, regardless of his own unimportant fate; and last, but not least, because the

offensive in naval war was the beginning and middle and end of national strategy.

Laboriosus in negotio, fortis in periculo, industrius in agendo, celer in conficiendo. So was the ideal of the great captain defined by Cicero, and it is over the heads of intellectual pygmies that great masters speak to one another, be it though it may in different tongues, across long and dark ages that intervene.

CHAPTER XLV¹

CLAUSEWITZ IN MANCHURIA

WHEN Meckel took ship for Japan to train those apt pupils the Mikado's officers in the mysteries of the art of modern war, we can feel reasonably assured that the remarkable works of Clausewitz were duly packed away among his heavy baggage.

The great bulk of modern German military literature is very poor stuff, but about 1 per cent. of it is in the first class. Clausewitz, Willisen, Scharnhorst, and a few others, among the ancients; Moltke, Yorck von Wartenburg, von der Goltz, among the moderns, are of those—to spare a longer list—whose works it is indispensable for every officer to read with understanding. Acquaintance with military history, the actions of great generals, and the writings of masters is indeed only a foundation for the study of the art of war, but no finished work can be produced without it.

Between the scientific conception of war and of military organisation thus obtained, and the art of commanding or administering an army, there is, however, a wide gulf fixed. There are some light-hearted soldiers and civilians who think they can cross this gulf at a bound; they are the same individuals who cost us armies in the field and millions at the council board. The truth is that the next stage is arduous, and that it demands the application of definite principles, ascertained by study, to concrete cases; in war or manœuvres

¹ *The Times*, March 23, 1905.

by the soldier, and in some humble departmental *rôle* by the civilian. It is only after this process that the ripe fruit of experience can be garnered, and that an individual can be expected to possess the talent and art of commanding—that is to say, the instinct of acting correctly, whether in the saddle or at the desk, without waiting to question or reason. But to think that the master, whether we call him Minister, General, or Chief of the General Staff, can be produced, like Pallas, without the drudgery of travail, is very presumptuous. We know to our cost and sorrow that this supposition leads to continual misfortunes, both in the conduct of war and in military organisation; and we should recognise that these disappointments are entirely due to the absence of fixed and immutable principles entailed by the neglect of some part of the preliminary apprenticeship above described. “Vom Wissen zum Können ist immer ein Sprung; der Sprung aber ist vom Wissen und nicht vom Nichtwissen.” So said Willisen, and he was one who was qualified to speak.

Some British officers have no doubt read Clausewitz, and a larger number know his classic works by reputation; but to the average lay reader he is probably little more than a name. To the Japanese he must have been a revelation, and, without being in Meckel's confidence, we can believe that this talented officer's exposition of the celebrated memorandum which Clausewitz addressed to the Prince Royal of Prussia in the early part of 1812 must have been recognised at once as something quite out of the common, and worthy of a very important place in Japanese studies.

The present enemies of Japan also discovered Clausewitz several years ago, since no less a person than General Dragomiroff translated and annotated, for the benefit of the Tsar's army, the particular memorandum to which we have referred, declaring that the whole spirit of Clausewitz's teaching was contained in it. Thus we can say that the combatants in Manchuria must each have had the opportunity of studying this

classic author, and it becomes a matter of interest to notice how much each side profited from the fact.

To make a summary of the memorandum in question would be tedious; but as all save one of the great battles in Manchuria have been waged by the Japanese in close accordance with the spirit and almost the letter of Clausewitz's doctrine,¹ and as the same battles have been fought by the Russians with absolute disregard of them, it is certainly worth while to show how reading and reflection may profit one army, and how the neglect of this respectable practice may ruin another.

It is, perhaps, not correct to speak of the works of any great master of the art of war as the embodiment of a doctrine, since Clausewitz himself has said that war is not a system nor a closed doctrine. There must, he says, necessarily be a contradiction between any such theory and war, because the practice of war extends with indeterminate limits in almost all directions. If we call his memorandum the fruit of his experience rather than a doctrine, we shall be nearer the truth.

Take the defensive first. What is the fundamental principle to remember? Clausewitz tells us—Never remain absolutely passive; throw yourself upon the front and flanks of the enemy at the moment of his attack. The defensive, he declares, should only be adopted for a certain length of the line, in order to compel the enemy to deploy his forces to attack this line; the offensive is then taken by troops held in reserve. The art of intrenching is not intended to enable men to shelter behind a parapet, but to enable them to attack the enemy with greater success: the defensive, in short, should only be a means to favour the attack upon ground selected in advance.

Clausewitz is the mortal enemy of all half-measures. In making a plan, he says, some considerable objective must always be kept in view, such as the attack on a large part of the hostile army and its complete destruc-

¹ A very distinguished admiral wrote to say that the principles inculcated by Clausewitz were none other than those which Nelson invariably followed.

tion. If we aim at some petty objective and the enemy aims at a great one, it is staking gold against copper. Once made, the plan must be pursued with the greatest possible energy; if we gain advantage on the wing where we attack we must push forward with resolution, like Napoleon at Ratisbon and Wagram, and not hesitate when half victorious like the Arch-Duke Charles. Therefore, says Clausewitz, the first place among all the causes of victory in the present state of the military art should be given to the principle: Pursue a considerable and decisive objective with the utmost energy and resolution.

On the offensive, he continues, the object should be to attack part of the enemy's army with superior forces and keep the remainder in a state of uncertainty or inaction by occupying their attention. This, he declares, is the sole means—provided we have equal or inferior force—to fight the enemy with relative advantage, and consequently with chances of success on our side. The weaker we are, the fewer troops we must use to occupy the enemy, and comparatively the larger must be the numbers of our decisive attack. The principal effort should be made against a wing, which should be attacked in front and flank, or by entirely turning it and attacking it in rear; it is only by dislodging the enemy from his line of retreat that great results are obtained by victory. It is rarely possible to surround an army completely, since this act presumes an immense physical or moral superiority. But the enemy can be thrown off his line of retreat by an attack on a flank, and this generally produces great results. Above everything, the certainty, or the strong probability, of victory—that is to say, of dislodging the enemy from the battlefield—is the chief thing to aim at. The plan of battle must aim at that result, for even a victory that is not decisive can be made so by energy in pursuit. The enemy's wing must be attacked concentrically, so that his troops may be assailed from all sides. Even if the enemy has enough troops at this point to face in all directions, nevertheless

they will lose courage, suffer heavy losses, and become disordered—in short, will give way.

The concordance of attacks of divisions and army corps is not to be obtained by directing them from one point and asking them to preserve constant touch, despite distances which separate them, or the enemy who may intervene; the march of one body must not be exactly regulated upon that of another. To ask troops to act in this way would be a most defective manner of obtaining simultaneous action; it would be subordinated to a thousand eventualities, incapable of leading to great results and certain to get as well thrashed by a vigorous enemy. The true method, says Clausewitz, is to give to each divisional or corps commander the principal direction of his march, and to indicate to him the enemy as the objective and victory as the aim. Each column commander should therefore receive the order to attack the enemy, wherever he may be, and with all his forces. But it must never be allowed that the responsibility for failure should fall on the column commander, since this would be certain to engender indecision. Each column commander has only one responsibility—namely, that the body of troops he commands takes part in the action with all its forces and recoils from no sacrifice. A well-organised and independent column can resist very superior forces for a time and cannot be destroyed in an instant. Even premature or unsuccessful attack will not be useless from the point of view of the general plan, for the enemy will be forced to deploy and use up his strength against the attack in question, enabling us to assail him elsewhere under advantageous conditions.

Lastly may be mentioned a principle upon which Clausewitz insisted with all his strength, and could never sufficiently impress upon his royal scholar—Never engage all your forces at once and at haphazard, by which method you lose all power of directing them; but fatigue and tire out the enemy everywhere with weak forces while keeping back a decisive mass for the

last decisive moment. When once this mass is launched, employ it with the utmost decision and audacity.

These great guiding principles for the conduct of troops in battle are worth recalling, since, although they were written nearly a hundred years ago and are in great measure the fruit of the bitter lessons taught to Europe by Napoleon, there is not a word or line, in the extracts we have given, that does not apply to the battle tactics of the present day ; and it is even open to argument whether their application is not more advisable now than formerly. They are still the foundation of German tactics, and we are not sure that they do not also dominate German policy, while it will be abundantly clear to every one who has followed the course of the great battles in Manchuria that the spirit of Clausewitz has presided over Japanese victories and wept over Russian defeats. On the single occasion when the Japanese plan of battle fell short of the ideal of the master—namely, Liauyang—it is also notorious that complete success, not being deserved, was not obtained.

What Dragomiroff may have to say about his wasted labour we shall be curious to hear.

CHAPTER XLVI¹

KUROPATKIN'S SUPERSESSION

By order of the Tsar, bearing date March 15, General Kuropatkin was relieved of his functions as Commander-in-Chief of the Russian military and naval forces in the Far East, and General Linievitch appointed to succeed him. For some time past it has been understood that the recall of the Russian commander was decided in principle, but it was anticipated that the succession would fall to the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaievitch. At the last moment this idea has been abandoned, and to Linievitch, at all events temporarily, has fallen the task of extricating, if he can, the remains of the Russian armies from their dangerous position.

The prevailing sentiment throughout the world will be one of sympathy with General Kuropatkin, and of regret that the magnanimity which we usually associate with the action of monarchs should not have inspired the Emperor of Russia to extend to a faithful servant who has borne the burden and heat of a year of war some measure of Imperial gratitude. So far as Kuropatkin personally has been concerned he has always been a popular figure, and regret will be expressed, even among those who have not the slightest sympathy with Russia's cause in this war, that such a persistent run of ill-luck should have followed Skobelev's old chief-of-staff, and that not one gleam of success should have been vouchsafed to him after such a

¹ From *The Times* of March 20, 1905.

long and honourable career spent in the service of his country.

His difficulties have been nowhere more fully appreciated than in England. The unreadiness of Russia for war, the childish presumption of Russian diplomacy, the hopeless failure of the Russian navy, the inferiority of many of the troops first despatched to the seat of war, the incompetence of some Russian generals and of the Headquarters Staff in the field, the appalling difficulties of reinforcement, supply, and transport, and, worst of all, the marked superiority of the Japanese army as an instrument of war, have all served to extend to Kuropatkin no small measure of public sympathy.

But when war between great nations is concerned, and when rulers of people gamble for empire with men's lives as counters, the question of the individual is a matter of infinite unimportance compared with that of the achievement of the national end. It is a general's business to succeed, and the Russian commander failed. Was Kuropatkin a trustworthy leader, was he fit to command the vast numbers placed in action by modern war, did his actions conform with the practice of the great masters of the past, or did he prove himself to be inferior to a mission and an ordeal which we must all admit were terribly severe? At present no certain answer can be returned to these questions, since the character of Kuropatkin's relations with his Imperial master, on the one hand, and with the Viceroy Alexeieff, on the other, is not yet sufficiently cleared up to authorise the expression of any final judgment.

Kuropatkin's friends tell us that he was hampered at every step, that every fault was not his, but that of some one else, and that the general himself was only the passive agent of the Imperial will. We are told of the Tsar's study, with the maps outspread, and the positions of all the troops elaborately set out, and we are asked to believe that a raid, a reconnaissance, or a general action may have been, and indeed usually

were, the result of some Imperial indiscretion or impromptu. When we ask how it could be that a general should submit to such dictation and throw away men's lives in actions he knew to be unwise, we are told that Kuropatkin's device was *loyal je serai pendant ma vie* ; that no free Englishman could understand the motives that would prompt an anything but free Russian, and, in short, that Kuropatkin only existed to obey his master's behests, whatever they might be and whether filtered through Alexeieff or through another.

But then, on the other hand, we are told an absolutely different story. Alexeieff has stated without a shade of hesitation that Kuropatkin did exactly what he pleased, and even at St. Petersburg the idea that any action or inaction on Kuropatkin's part was prompted from a high quarter is energetically denied. The general himself has very properly kept silence from first to last, but in course of time it will probably become known how far he was hampered and how far he was a free agent. In any case the onus of proof that his acts were not due to his own initiative certainly lies upon those who state the fact, since it is against all sense and reason that even a Russian general should retain his command and allow his army to become the sport of something worse than an Aulic Council 6,000 miles away. Neither Suvaroff nor Skobelev, certainly, would have proved so malleable, and if the autocratic system demands that generals should lead armies to defeat against their better judgment, economy would profit and the national cause suffer no harm by the removal of the names of all generals from the Russian Army List.

If we take the facts before us, and exclude, until it is proved, the suggestion of dictation by the Tsar, the record of Kuropatkin as a leader of armies during the war does not entitle him to a place among the immortals. The abandonment of Sassulitch on the Yalu in face of very superior forces ; the despatch of Stackelberg to his ruin at Telissu ; the failure to gain the slightest advantage

from the dispersion of the Japanese armies during their difficult march over the mountains into the Liao Valley; the reverses at Tashihchiao and Tomucheng; and the four great defeats which finally wrecked the armies of the Tsar, did not give occasion for Kuropatkin to display, at any point, high talent for command.

Much was made of his successful withdrawal from Liauyang without disaster, but since the numbers engaged on both sides and the character of the position have become better known it is possible that the historian may find more fault with his conduct of this battle than with that of any other. At the Shaho he set his army a task which, according to the experience of all that had passed, it was manifestly incapable of executing, and, even if the plight of Port Arthur demanded a sacrifice of the army, the direction of the several columns and the want of cohesion in their action displayed an absence of the practice of troop-leading and of the genius for modern battle on a large scale, which made Oyama's task comparatively easy. At Heikautai the Commander-in-Chief remained passive with two armies while Gripenberg, with seven divisions, fought an independent action and was beaten; the initiative and will of the higher command nowhere impressed themselves upon the operations. Finally, at the great battle of Mukden, Kuropatkin followed his enemy's lead too humbly, recognised the direction of the main attack too late, and though he made a gallant effort, to which later history will do ample justice, to stem the on-coming torrent, he was always a day at least behind the fair.

We were not able at an early stage of the war to concur with the adulation showered upon Kuropatkin, since it was obvious that he had done nothing whatever in Manchuria to deserve it, and that the prevailing sentiment was inspired less by reason than by the instinct of hero-worship which always cries out for a god and frequently fixes upon the most undeserving person as the object of its affections and emotions.

The Anglo-Saxon race is peculiarly given to this pleasing act of self-deception, ruled as it not infrequently is, both in England and America, by sentiment rather than by sense. The tendency is not one to be encouraged, since it not only arouses false hopes, but leads, after disappointment, to most unjust aspersions and reprisals against quite respectable individuals who might perform useful service in the state were they not set upon a pinnacle and expected to perform prodigies necessarily reserved for immortal beings. The result is hard upon every one, since public opinion is deprived of the rock on which its faith was built, while all around the ground is littered with the remains of shattered idols. We must also recognise the fact that, when emperors and kings no longer lead their legions in war, the attainment of a high position in public favour by a great general is apt to overshadow the popularity of a home-staying and peace-loving prince, and that, so soon as a great reputation made by war is in the forming, influences become automatically set in motion to counteract this undesirable process. "If you send one of us across the Channel to invade England instead of going yourself," said Bernadotte with worldly wisdom to the First Consul, "success will elevate the victor to a higher position than yours."

From sources friendly to the Russian cause we gather that Kuropatkin remained what his previous record had led some people to anticipate would be the case—namely, an administrator and a man of *minutiae*, endeavouring to make good the manifold defects in his armies by intense personal energy and constant interference, and losing in consequence the power of dominating the battle and the theatre of war by reason of immersion in detail. He was, and he remained, a chief-of-staff, and the one thing Russia lacked was the genius of a Skobelev to utilise not only the warlike attributes of a great and most gallant army, but even the talents of Kuropatkin himself, which in their proper sphere were very considerable and would have been of

infinite service to his country if employed upon those tasks for which they were pre-eminently adapted.

There is no reason, however, why war should not even now introduce us to a born leader of men on the Russian side. On the whole there is perhaps no other nation to which we should look more confidently for the rising of a star of the first magnitude in war, for nowhere else are the conditions quite so favourable for his appearance. But, as Napoleon said in that incomparable opening paragraph descriptive of the 18me Brumaire, *quelquefois il tard de paraître*, and we have not arrived at the moment when the genius appears, all obstacles fall before him, and the people exclaim with one accord, *le voilà !* It is also certain that the sum of study and experience required for success in modern war militates against the appearance of the heaven-born leader *ex nubibus*, and that nothing nowadays can make up for the want of thorough military education.

General Linievitch has first to puzzle his way out of a very disagreeable place before he can begin his task of reorganisation, and the popular old veteran will have his work cut out to break clear. He has a fine reputation among the Siberian troops, and he carried back a good part of the First Manchurian Army—namely, the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Siberian Army Corps—from the field of battle with considerable credit to himself and his troops. But it is doubtful whether this army numbers more than 50,000 combatants at the present hour, and the Second and Third Armies are probably in a state of utter disorganisation and incapable for the moment of any serious effort.

It may be that the Grand Duke Nicholas will eventually take command, and it is suggested at St. Petersburg that General Sukhomlinoff will then act as Chief of the Staff and that a local council of war, consisting of various ancient but talented officers, are to remain in service in Manchuria and give advice. It is not yet certain how much will be left of the original

armies to profit by this new arrangement, nor is it by any means assured that this pooling of the command among a syndicate will produce any better results than those obtained by the late and unsuccessful general manager. "It ever behoveth," wrote Sir Walter Raleigh, "that one only commander ought to be, for plurality of chieftains doth rarely or never work any good effect, yet with this caution that he be of experience and wise."

CHAPTER XLVII¹
*THE PROGRESS AND FATE OF THE
RUSSIAN ARMADA*

The Times, April 7.

SINCE the Russian people pretend to exercise the right of laying down the terms of peace which they will be magnanimous enough to accord to the enemy who is pursuing their armies, the continuation of hostilities follows as a matter of course. When the normal convention governing the relations between winners and losers is duly re-established, it will be time to chronicle the conjectures relating to peace in some other parts of our newspapers than those devoted to *faits divers*.

As the thaw has a restraining influence upon land operations, and, on the contrary, a quickening influence at sea, the chief attention of the present moment centres upon the naval operations, which soon promise to enter upon a deeply interesting stage. Admiral Rozhdestvensky, according to Reuter's agent at Antananarivo, left the waters of Madagascar on March 16; the telegram from Lloyd's agent at Tamatave announcing the fact, but mentioning no date, was not published until eleven days later, for some reason that has not been explained. If British observers scattered over the world would learn to place themselves in the position of the readers of their telegrams, and would despatch concise and complete reports of events occurring under their

¹ Compiled from articles in *The Times* of April 7, 11, 15, May 7 and June 10, 1906.

eyes, the cause of this country in time of war would eventually profit. Admiral Nebogatoff's reinforcements, which left Libau on February 15, reached Jibuti on April 2, having thus taken forty-six days on their journey. The junction and future co-operation of these squadrons are now assured.

The question remains whether the additional strength obtained by the arrival of Nebogatoff's ships will or will not compensate for the loss of time entailed upon Rozhdestvensky by waiting for his colleague, and for the further loss of homogeneity in the Baltic Fleet arising from the presence of several second-rate ships in the line of battle and elsewhere. If we can take the experience of the old days as a safe guide, we should judge that the presence of old, slow, and not very powerful ships in a line of battle is not on the whole advantageous, but the reverse. In a modern squadron they are just as expensive and troublesome to provide for as vessels of a better class, and they are liable to give greater cause for anxiety to the admiral in command.

There are many who hold that the Baltic Fleet does not mean business, and that its menace is only bluff. It is difficult to agree with this view. The record of the Russian navy during the war has not been good. On the other hand, it is an aristocratic service and in favour with the Court. It is more than likely that highly placed persons may have decided that it is necessary for the Russian navy to re-establish its lost prestige at all costs. Moreover, if we regard certain aspects of the general situation, we can hardly say that such decision would be wrong. There is a curious letter in the archives of the French Ministry of Marine, evidently dictated by Napoleon to Decrès, and sent to Villeneuve on September 1, 1805, which chimes in curiously with the present circumstances:—

“The Emperor's intention [writes Decrès] is to choose from the ranks the officers most fit for high commands, no matter what their position may be. He exacts and requires, above everything else, noble

ambition for honour, love of glory, decision of character, and courage without limits. He wishes to discredit this prudence which is the reproach of his navy, this defensive attitude which kills the squadron and doubles the strength of the enemy. He demands audacity from all ranks alike ; and, no matter what the issue may be, he promises his consideration and esteem to all those who carry this virtue to excess, to all who do not hesitate to attack equal or superior forces and to fight a battle of extermination with them. Such are his Majesty's orders ; he counts as nothing the loss of his ships, if they are lost with glory, and both recommends and orders you never to hesitate to attack."

There is also this to be said on the more material aspect of the question—namely, that there seems to be an impression at St. Petersburg that a successful naval action with Admiral Togo will at once bring the whole military edifice of the Japanese to the ground with a crash, and that the Russian army will then have nothing to do but pick up the pieces. Such an idea seems sanguine. Even if victory is obtained, the chances are that what will be left of the Russian navy afterwards will not be worth much ; that the remnant will have no port for repair save Vladivostok ; and that the superiority of the Japanese in light craft of all kinds will make it dangerous for the Russian remnant to keep at sea, and more than dangerous to endeavour to control the narrow waters. Considering the numerous points of departure for ships from Japan and the number of ports of landing in Korea and Liautung, unchallenged domination of the sea area of a character to prevent absolutely the supply of the Japanese armies with things they cannot draw from China does not seem within the right of a victorious Russian remnant to anticipate.

But a different view is entertained in Russia, and it is apparently believed that the command of the sea is something that can be obtained by the errant Russian armada at a blow, like Medusa's head, and that this

prize can then be inserted into the shield of Perseus to astonish and benumb all who look upon it. When Perseus finds Medusa asleep, she is easily decapitated ; but it is difficult to ensure that this will often be the case. Certainly, a naval defeat would be a very serious matter indeed for Japan ; but it is doubtful whether it would have all the consequences that are anticipated. It is true that our Secretary of State for War has told us that if an enemy is in a position to land 100,000 men on our shores he can save himself the pains, because "he will command the whole of the avenues of the sea." But nothing is more improbable, since the said avenues, being unlimited and not shown on any chart, cannot be commanded by a limited force, and what there is left of all the navies of Europe after a contest with England will not have much power to command anything.

In any case, the advent of the Japanese forces is shortly anticipated at Vladivostok, which seems likely before long to become the most undesirable locality for residence of all the seaside resorts in Asia. For a long time past the Japanese have been hard at work in North-Eastern Korea ; Gensan either is now or shortly will be joined to Seoul by rail, and we should judge that Songching has been made an advanced base on the coast for the purpose of pending operations. Action against outlying points like Sakhalin is also permissible now that the main armies have been struck down.

The discussion of a future plan of operations at St. Petersburg will not improbably have disclosed much difference of opinion as to the best course to pursue. Large bodies of Russians are reported at Fenghuahsien, Kungchuling, Changchun, and Kirin, but the immediate intentions and dispositions of General Linievitch are not yet apparent. He has all his work cut out to reorganise his armies. General Batianoff, a veteran of seventy, takes over the Second Army, and General Kaulbars resumes command of the Third ; Kuropatkin, on the principle that *tel brille au second qui s'éclipse au premier*,

is given command of the Siberian Army ; Sakharoff disappears, and Kharkevitch becomes the Chief of the General Staff of the armies in Manchuria. It does not appear to have been a wise step, nor fair to Linievitch, to have left Kuropatkin in a subordinate command.

If the decision is that Rozhdestvensky is to make for Vladivostok, the fortress must, of course, be held. There is not the same objection to the retention of Vladivostok as there was to that of Port Arthur. The cases are not quite parallel. The isolation of 80,000 men at Port Arthur left Kuropatkin without a serious army and incapable of winning the first round of the game of war ; 80,000 men at Vladivostok would not, if united with the large numbers of the present field armies, necessarily exercise any decisive or preponderating influence upon the course of events. There is not a squadron at Vladivostok to be compelled to steam out and fight in order that the cause of the nation may profit. There are only two battered cruisers, and possibly a score of torpedo craft, many of them small vessels transported overland, and the Baltic Fleet must not only win, but also profit from its own victories, since there is no other serious force behind. Lastly, even the loss of Vladivostok and its garrison will not seriously augment the depreciation of Russian prestige after all that has passed. We should therefore suppose that there will be no decision to abandon Vladivostok, diminished in importance though the fortress has become.

But the question of the future action of the main armies raises a much more difficult problem. The Russians must believe that if Oyama is ordered to advance when his losses are made good, the railway repaired, and the country fit for extensive operations, the chances of resisting him will not be great. They will now perceive the folly of not having completed their units to war strength before despatching fresh troops, and in many cases the tag-rag of drafts will have to form upon meagre cadres of exhausted and dispirited units. The solidity of the Russian armies

is very seriously impaired, though we should not like to go so far as a cynical writer in the foreign press who declares that Russian private soldiers are not demoralised because they never had any *morale* to lose.

From the purely British point of view there is one consideration worth bearing in mind. The suggestion made in some quarters that Russia is so weakened and exhausted that she will be incapable of further effort for many years to come is not as yet an opinion that can be safely entertained. The very causes which prevent Russia from deploying all her strength in East Asia also prevent her from rapidly losing her character as a military Power elsewhere, while the natural desire to seek for means and the occasion to re-establish her lost military prestige is not a sentiment we can afford to neglect.

The Times, April 10.

WE have suffered many things at the hands of the Russian navy during this war, nevertheless the news that Admiral Rozhdestvensky and the Baltic Fleet scorning evasion and concealment, have stood on down the Straits of Malacca, have passed Singapore, and have sailed proudly into the China seas will send a thrill of admiration through all Englishmen who read of it, and will enable us to forgive many things and admit that the Russian seamen appear ready to meet with courage all that the fortune of war may send them.

The long delay at Madagascar and the doubt that has arisen concerning the intention of the Russian Government to continue the war have caused interest in the proceedings of the Baltic Fleet to wane. It was stated in *The Times* of January 21, that three months would elapse before the Russian navy would make a serious attempt to reach the Far East, and this anticipation, based upon the coaling arrangements for the fleet, has been realised. On the other hand, the arrival of Nebogatoff's squadron at Jibuti last month appeared

to indicate that Rozhdestvensky would await the arrival of this reinforcement before acting, but this has proved not to be the case, although the precise intentions of the Russians respecting this squadron remain to be determined.

Up to Saturday last no definite news of Rozhdestvensky's movements had been received since March 18, when a Reuter telegram from Antananarivo was published stating that the Baltic Fleet had left Nossi Bé on March 16 for an unknown destination. The next information, other than reports of doubtful value, was the announcement brought to Singapore on Saturday morning by the steamer *Tara* to the effect that forty-seven Russian sail had been sighted off One Fathom Bank, in the Straits of Malacca, at 1 p.m. on April 7; a few hours later the fleet hove in sight off Singapore and, passing across the bay at 2 p.m., steamed away to the north-east.

The first point to notice is that Nebogatoff's squadron only left Jibuti at 10 a.m. on April 7, steering in a southerly direction, so that it is out of court for the purpose of immediate operations. The exact number of Russian sail of each class observed by the watchers at Singapore is fully given in a Reuter telegram, and, though some doubt is expressed in a later message concerning certain important units, it is best to assume, until proof is given to the contrary, that all the fighting ships are with the fleet. The intentions of the Russian admiral appear at present to be simple and straightforward; he seems willing to keep in the fairway of the great trade routes, and to leave to the enemy the choice of opposing him where he will. But this may be only appearance, and the only manner in which his future movements can be discovered with certainty will be by the intelligent activity of the Japanese cruisers. Rozhdestvensky's next port of call will naturally depend upon coaling requirements, and the balance of probabilities points to the selection of some sheltered bay or anchorage in the waters of the French possessions in Indo-China.

We do not know what facilities the Dutch Government may be prepared to offer as an alternative attraction to French hospitality, but the Brussels correspondent of *The Times* telegraphed on December 27 that he had official authority for stating that the Netherlands would maintain an attitude of strict neutrality, and that neither Sabang nor any other port would be placed at the disposal of either belligerent, and it is greatly to be hoped that this laudable decision has not been reconsidered. The composition of the Dutch squadron of the East Indies was given in *The Times* of January 8. It consists of two armoured and four protected cruisers, besides a number of gunvessels, gunboats, and torpedo boats.

It has not been advisable hitherto to say much about the Japanese preparations in the Malay Archipelago, but it is believed that they have been very thorough, and have aimed at the complete observation and control of all the channels by which it was possible for Russian ships to approach the China seas to the north of Australia. This object has been attained by a network of Intelligence agents in all the important points of the islands, and by the activity of a large squadron of cruisers and auxiliary vessels suitable for the work of scouting. The adoption of the bold course by the Russians has, indeed, apparently rendered all these precautions unnecessary, but possibly the very excellence of the watch may have led to the Russian choice of routes. In any case, three important points have been gained by Japan—the Russians have been observed and reported without delay, and are probably now under close observation; secondly, Russian scouting by Russian cruisers has been rendered impracticable; and the despatch of colliers in advance of the fleet has been altogether stopped. The armada has been forced to hold together, and the strategical task of the Japanese has been made easier. The Dutch press in January last reported the presence of a flotilla of destroyers or torpedo boats to the north of Borneo, and credited the rumour that it was the

intention of the Japanese to attack the Russians as soon as they appeared ; but the station taken up by the combined fleet under Admiral Togo has never yet been definitely reported.

The scouting squadron acts like an independent division of cavalry in the field ; behind it are the detachments to pass on information to the commander, while the main body in rear is protected by its own scouts in precisely the same manner as an army of operations on land. Wherever Admiral Togo may be, he is certainly not cruising on a trade route, or his presence would long ere this have been reported. Wherever he is, he will have heard of the arrival of the enemy in the course of Saturday last, as he is certain to be within touch of a cable ; and that the cables are in order we know from the little flutter at Hong-Kong, the object of which is not apparent.

The Times, April 15.

THE Russians who are accusing us of all sorts of misdeeds in relation to the naval campaign, should endeavour to reflect that the Baltic Fleet has taken no precautions whatsoever to escape notice or evade the enemy ; and that, if it has been under the constant observation of British ships for several days past, the situation scarcely admitted of any other result. It is apparently believed in the Russian press that a fleet of forty-seven sail, covering an area of several square miles, passing along a frequented route of trade, burning soft coal and darkening the heavens with its smoke, can remain unnoticed like a rabbit in a turnip-field.

The anticipation was unreasonable, and consequently the telegrams from Singapore, Weltvreden, Amsterdam, Surabaya, and Batavia, declaring with pleasing unanimity that the Baltic Fleet had detached its main combatant elements towards Muntok and Java, never had any serious chance of producing the desired effect. We all know the old Napoleonic injunctions to Talleyrand,

Fouché, or Decrès, "Faites mettre dans les journaux hollandais qu'une escadre française a débarqué en Egypte," etc.; but times have changed, and this procedure enters into the category of *vieille escrime* when not employed by a master mind and made to correspond superficially with facts. A modern fleet may be packed away, as Admiral Togo's appears to be, in some unfrequented anchorage and remain undiscovered for long; but when an armada sails half round the world along a trade route covered with shipping, concealment is not for the admiral to expect. The British Empire alone is the proud possessor of nearly forty thousand vessels, and as these are normally engaged upon their legitimate occupations, save where sunk or captured by a light-hearted belligerent, it is difficult for an armada to prove an *alibi* contrary to the truth.

We know that Rozhdestvensky with not less than forty-two ships was in lat. 8° N., long. 108°55' E. at twelve noon on April 11, and that he was steering N.N.E. at from eight to ten knots speed. That is precisely the character of report that all observers should endeavour to supply when operations in which we are interested at sea come under their observation. Of the Japanese movements, save reports of scurrying scouts, we hear nothing of moment. The Russians are doubtless under close and constant observation, and as they are proceeding upon the course the Japanese would select for them, there is nothing better to be done than to await their arrival at the point where Admiral Togo has determined to fight. If modern science has not yet increased the powers of vision at sea, it has increased in a very remarkable manner the sense of hearing. The initial situation presented points of difficulty for the Japanese, since it could not be known in advance where Rozhdestvensky would debouch from the Indian Ocean, or whether his purpose was to seek an action or avoid it. Consequently the scouts were widely dispersed; but the delay of the Russians at the Anamba Islands for something like twenty-four hours will probably have allowed

ample margin for the assembly of all the Japanese scouts at the respective rendezvous appointed in advance to meet the case that has now arisen.

The comparative lists of the rival fleets given in Appendix C was drawn up for *The Times* by a naval officer of the highest reputation and experience, and it discloses the respective strength of the combatants in material attributes of power, so far as any paper list can convey them.

It will be seen that in protected and other cruisers, as well as in torpedo craft of all kinds, the superiority of Japan is overwhelming, and it becomes an interesting study to consider how this situation is likely to affect the tactics of the rival fleets in battle. For, if the armoured cruisers of Japan find a difficulty in maintaining their posts in action against the Russian battleships, and are out-fought by their stronger enemies, it is obvious that there will be cold comfort in the fact that a superior number of Japanese light craft will be present to look on at an action in which they dare not take part. The tactics of Admiral Togo seem, therefore, in some measure suggested to him by the circumstances of the situation. He is in this position, that he has a dangerously small number of first-class battleships which he cannot afford to see overwhelmed; and, on the other hand, a very much larger number of cruisers and light craft of all kinds which he can afford to lose without endangering the situation of his country. His problem is to utilise his superiority in secondary ships for the benefit of his primary elements, and for the re-establishment of the balance between these latter and the battleships of the enemy.

For Admiral Togo the problem is not indeed new, since he has had to nurse his battleships from the beginning, and has already made great calls upon his various torpedo flotillas, which have distinguished themselves upon occasions too numerous to name, although failing to score on the night after the action of August 10 for some reason not yet explained. But the present

problem is different from that during the close blockade of Port Arthur, since Rozhdestvensky keeps the sea like a gentleman, and displays no inclination to hanker after the study of terrestrial magnetism in which his predecessors excelled. He challenges a fleet action, and he gains nothing by avoiding it or scuttling away to Vladivostok, save delay, which is of no utility to Russia, but rather the reverse. The object in war is to smash the enemy's main force and have done with it. The question is, then, how to employ the surplus of secondary ships on the Japanese side, or, in the words of a distinguished naval officer, how best to arrange the "Tactics of Fast Craft." These craft are provided to-day with a weapon that was unknown in the old days—namely, the torpedo—and within effective range of this terrible missile the finest battleships in the world become momentarily only the equal of the fast craft in annihilating power.

Captain Bacon, D.S.O., R.N., in the paper to which we have alluded—a paper which appeared in *Brassey's Annual* in the year 1900—considered the case of rival fleets circumstanced in much the same manner as are those of Russia and Japan to-day. He thought that the time might come when it would be of advantage to risk ships even to annihilation in order to deal a blow and restore the balance in vessels of a more needed type, and he declared that "the sacrifice of ships of one class to produce equality or superiority in a larger class by reduction of the enemy's number is a new possibility in naval warfare, and had no counterpart in the olden days." But it is not little that is asked of the men setting out upon this mission. "He who sends them forth to attack large and worthy prey must do so with the full knowledge that they may never return"—the craft, in short, must be hurled at the enemy in the same manner as a shell is hurled from a gun. "The man who has any doubts, who in any way restricts their movements by desire of their return, or even mentions return before the object to be attained has

been attempted to the legitimate full, had better never determine to order the attempt."

With almost uncanny prescience Captain Bacon further declared that a war might possibly last for a year, and that during this time an admiral with many fast craft might not wish to use them offensively, either because of the nature of the opposition of the enemy or from the fact that they were more useful to him in other spheres, but that the time might come when he would have to decide that vessels would have to be deliberately sacrificed for objects worthy to be attained. Captain Bacon then proceeded to imagine the situation of to-day in the China seas, and placed himself in the position of Admiral Togo the day before the battle. "During the night," he asks, "would not the admiral hurl his fast craft at the enemy? Would they be kept for future scouting work which might never prove necessary? Would they not be let loose like hell-hounds to tear into the enemy's fleet—torpedoing, ramming, destroying, and using every nerve and knot to destroy, and so pave the way for the morrow's victory?" It is not only the destroyers and torpedo boats that Captain Bacon had in his mind; he considered that larger vessels might be used for the same purpose, and he thought that "so surely as the balance of the morrow's fight is uncertain, and a decisive victory desirable, so surely will a portion of the whole of the fast craft be hurled at the enemy to do their worst."

That paper was not, indeed, written for the benefit of Japanese seamen, but the history of the past year shows that they have already assimilated its spirit with very great profit. That the impending battle in the Far East may conceivably be accompanied by an exhilarating naval cavalry charge of the character suggested appears to be a contingency that is far from improbable. It is also evident that, to obtain the full benefit from this enterprise, the fleet action and the dash of the fast ships must take place, like the acts of a comedy, within the twenty-four hours of a day and a night, so as to

take full advantage of broken formations and distraught nerves. The absence, up to the moment of writing, of any word or sign of a torpedo or other attack in a sea probably swarming with Japanese ships, renders it highly probable that fast craft are being assembled and nursed for an effort of the character of that which Captain Bacon has defined. Who can say what effect it may not produce upon the Baltic Fleet, if delivered during a dark night by the daring seamen of Japan? ¹

The Times, May 10.

It is not in the true interest of Japan that she should quarrel with France over the alleged lax interpretation by our friend and neighbour of her duties in relation to neutrality during the war. But at the same time it is not required by the exigencies of the general situation that we should remain blind to the precedents that are being created in the waters of French Indo-China.

The French possessions in the East have practically been used as a Russian base for the preparation and conduct of belligerent operations ever since the date, between April 12 and 14, when Rozhdestvensky placed his fleet in temporary security in Kamranh Bay. Even the pretence of remaining outside territorial waters was dropped. When Prince Arisugawa and his suite passed near the bay on board a German steamer they were able to observe the Russian ships in French waters. From this comfortable lair Russian cruisers and destroyers issued out and stopped neutral vessels engaged in the ordinary course of trade.

When at length there was a *faux départ* of certain ships on April 22 and a general flitting on April 26 in response to the energetic remonstrances of Mr. Motono at Paris, the Russians at St. Petersburg only laughed

¹ In the subsequent battle the fleet action preceded the attack of the fast craft. It is possible, however, that the appearance of the Russians on the scene in the early morning was itself due to the torpedo menace, and that this fact, combined with the heavy weather, made it incumbent upon the Japanese to reverse the order of procedure. There is no doubt that the spirit of Captain Bacon's advice was adhered to.

scornfully and replied that their fleet would only move on a few miles and would act very much as it chose. So it befell, and the armada brought up again only forty miles to the north of Kamranh at the next convenient anchorage off Port Dayet and in Binkhoi Bay, and has since been lurking in the same waters. Some fifteen ships under Admiral Nebogatoff, who had left Jibuti on April 7, were reported off Penang on April 27 and passed Singapore at 5.30 a.m. on May 5. By this time they are doubtless in touch with their friends, thus having profited in their turn from the advantages offered by French hospitality.

The situation, apart from its political aspects, cannot fail to inspire some unpleasant reflections. If we are to assume from this precedent that the ships of any Power with whom we are at war propose to make use of neutral waters in this impudent fashion, the necessity for some international compact on a question of such great delicacy becomes decidedly urgent. But it is also certain that a neutral will only permit these infractions of the duties pertaining to his position if the belligerent, to whose disadvantage the action takes place, is unable to enforce just regard for his legitimate rights. Therefore it is correct to say that the precedent of Kamranh is but one argument the more in favour of a strong navy.

The view advocated by *Le Temps* is that "Continental Powers" are less well equipped with naval bases abroad than "the insular Powers," and that, therefore—alas! poor logic!—the former must invent a theory of deportment all their own, by means of which they can make full use of neutral waters for belligerent operations.

The premises are inaccurate and the conclusions are the very last we should have expected to see endorsed by a responsible French newspaper. For, whatever may be the case with other Continental Powers, France has an admirable network of naval bases about the world—Corsica, Algeria, Tunis, Jibuti, Martinique, West Africa, Madagascar, French Indo-China, New

Caledonia—and all these points of vantage except Jibuti are equipped with defended harbours, forming a world-wide chain of stations second only in value and importance to our own. Where are the equivalent bases of the insular Power Japan? They do not exist, therefore the attempt to generalise is absurd.

But is this new French theory one that has been established after careful consideration of the facts by the naval advisers of the French Government, or is it a mere policy of circumstance invented *de toutes pièces* to meet the present emergency? France, of course, is the best judge of her vital interests, but we should say that the contention is very unwise, for, if France were engaged in war, say with Germany, she might on this principle find herself attacked all over the world by German squadrons and raiders from their secure refuges in neutral harbours. The French position at sea, instead of being, as it hitherto would have been, predominant in such war, and only indefensible against attack by England, would become dangerously insecure, and the troops that might have been drawn from French possessions to decide the main issue on the Meuse or the Rhine would be tied down to the duties of local defence. Is that a French interest, or is it not?

Roughly speaking, we should say that this contention might easily lose France 100,000 men in time of war at the decisive point, and for this reason we should like to know the views of French sailors, soldiers, and colonial administrators on this question before accepting the ideas, now put forward, *en besoin de cause*, as a doctrine that has been fully weighed in all its serious consequences.

The Times, July 7

At the present moment we are all awaiting authentic details of the great battle of the Sea of Japan before venturing to form any fixed conclusions upon a contest which must inevitably exercise a predominant influence upon naval policy, construction, armament, tactics, and

training for many years to come. It will be well if this attitude of reserve is maintained until the whole of the facts are before us in the reports rendered by both combatants, and if scraps of news or isolated facts are not seized upon by one school or by another in order to support preconceived theories. We can afford, without lasting harm, to witness facts distorted to accord with theories in some academical discussions, but in such a vital matter as naval war we cannot afford ourselves this popular luxury, and must start with an absolutely secure basis of ascertained facts before we trouble our heads about anything else.

All we know for certain is that a large and theoretically powerful Russian squadron joined issue with its enemy after midday on May 27, and that in the course of some 48 hours of battle and pursuit it was annihilated. If the victory of the Japanese was foreseen as probable by the best available naval opinion, we were certainly not led to expect that such an example would be made of the Russian armada in so short a time, and least of all that this result would be obtained practically without loss to the Japanese. We were all, seamen and landsmen alike, in a measure hypnotised by the paper lists of the Russian ships, which we now find to have been without importance. We were, in short, without sufficient experience of modern naval fighting on a grand scale, and of the real condition of the Russian armada, to foretell effects from causes before the event.

So inclined were some authorities to hedge, and to surround their prognostications with qualifying phrases, framed to suit any results that might ensue, that the Russians now accuse us of misleading them and of luring them on to their irretrievable disaster. That is an unfair and incorrect view to take of the case. We did not know very much of the real condition of the Russian fleet nor of its difficulties, weaknesses, and failings. The Russian Admiralty, on the other hand, must have been correctly informed on these points, and if the Russian people require to fix responsibilities for

failure they should demand the publication of Rozhdestvensky's reports from the day he assumed the command until the hour of battle.

The Russian ships, with the exception of the four that surrendered when surrounded by an overpowering force, appear to have been gallantly fought, and no discredit seems to attach to the Russian navy for the result of this fatal day, so far as the honour of the flag is concerned. The courage of resignation is not, indeed, the highest form of military virtue, but it is something, and both Russian soldiers and Russian seamen possess it in a peculiar degree. Some day, perhaps, when the Russian State is modernised and its people freed of their chains, Russian arms may restore the glamour they have lost, but it is certain that neither people, nor army, nor navy can recover from their present difficulties so long as the war continues. It is necessary that Russia should take guarantees against that *genre de faiblesse* of which Ney spoke in the dark December of 1812, the weakness, namely, "qui, inspirant une fausse sécurité sur les embarras de sa position, fait qu'on néglige de sonder toute la profondeur de ses blessures."

The modesty of Admiral Togo's telegraphic reports of his great and historic victory is as remarkable as the valour, skill, and tenacity by which it was obtained. Togo, like Sulla, will only say that he is fortunate, but we can recognise that he is great—great in the patience he exercised in the face of much provocation to enter upon the fight under conditions less favourable to the success of his cause; great in his determination to give decisive battle despite advice offered to him to resort to methods of evasion, subterfuge, and finesse; great in his use of not one but every means in his power to crush his enemy; and great, greatest perhaps of all, in his moderation after victory unparalleled in the annals of modern naval war.

The attitude of the Japanese people in the presence of this epoch-making triumph is a sight for men and gods. They have the grand manner of the ancients,

and their invariable attitude throughout the war, whether in the hour of victory or in that of disappointment, has been worthy of a great people. No noisy and vulgar clamour, no self-laudation, no triumph over a fallen enemy, but deep thankfulness, calm satisfaction, and once more reference of the cause of victory to the illustrious virtue of the Emperor of Japan. If this be the Yellow Peril, may the fates grant that we catch the infection of it by closer and more effective alliance with a people so worthy of our warm regard !

Not the least satisfactory circumstance of this great battle is the conclusive evidence afforded of the excellence of British training, naval construction, and armament. Just as Germany, by the agency of Meckel and others, has been instrumental in shaping and sharpening the Japanese army as a weapon of war, so British seamen and British constructors have been responsible in a large measure for the excellence of the Japanese navy. The tactics of the battle bear the impress of the Nelson traditions, the battle-worthiness of the ships is a tribute to the efficiency of British yards, while the havoc wrought by guns made in England appears to justify us in the belief that we can hold our own with the best. Good material is not everything, nor anything approaching to it, but it is a comforting thought to receive such an unanswerable proof that it is on our side.

The result of the battle of the Straits has been an imperious demand on the part of every civilised nation in the world that the war should cease. By sea and land Russia has been hopelessly defeated, and it is expected of her that she should recognise the situation and bow to the inevitable. It is clear that Russia's cause at sea has no longer defenders, and that without them it is indefensible. Russia, of course, may accept the judgment of the world and the defeat of her arms, and may offer to negotiate. But, also, she may not. The decision of this question does not rest with the world, nor with Japan, but with Russia, and with one man in Russia among 130 millions.

CHAPTER XLVIII

ADMIRAL TOGO'S REPORT OF THE BATTLE OF THE SEA OF JAPAN¹

By the help of Heaven our united squadron fought with the enemy's Second and Third Squadrons on May 27 and 28, and succeeded in almost annihilating him.

When the enemy's fleet first appeared in the south seas, our squadrons, in obedience to Imperial command, adopted the strategy of awaiting him and striking at him in our home waters. We therefore concentrated our strength at the Korean Straits, and there abode his coming north. After touching for a time on the coast of Annam, he gradually moved northward, and some days before the time when he should arrive in our waters several of our guard-ships were distributed on watch in a south-easterly direction, according to plan, while the fighting squadrons made ready for battle, each anchoring at its base so as to be ready to set out immediately.

Thus it fell out that on the 27th, at 5 a.m., the southern guard-ship *Shinano Maru* reported by wireless telegraphy, "Enemy's fleet sighted in No. 203 section. He seems to be steering for the east channel."

The whole crews of our fleet leaped to their posts; the ships weighed at once, and each squadron, proceeding in order to its appointed place, made its dispositions to receive the enemy. At 7 a.m. the guard-ship on the left wing of the inner line, the *Izumi*, reported: "The

¹ This account of the great naval battle was compiled by Admiral Togo, and published by the Imperial Naval Headquarter Staff on June 14.

enemy's ships are in sight. He has already reached a point twenty-five nautical miles to the north-west of Ukujima; he is advancing north-east." The Togo (Captain Togo Masamichi) section, the Dewa section, and the cruiser squadron (which was under the direct command of Vice-Admiral Kataoka) came into touch with the enemy from 10 to 11 a.m., between Iki and Tsushima, and thereafter as far as the neighbourhood of Okinoshima, these ships, though fired on from time to time by the enemy, successfully kept in constant touch with him, and conveyed by telegraph accurate and frequent reports of his state. Thus, though a heavy fog covered the sea, making it impossible to observe anything at a distance of over five miles, all the conditions of the enemy were as clear to us, who were thirty or forty miles distant, as though they had been under our very eyes. Long before we came in sight of him we knew that his fighting force comprised the Second and Third Baltic Squadrons, that he had seven special service ships with him, that he was marshalled in two columns line ahead, that his strongest vessels were at the head of the right column, that his special service craft followed in the rear, that his speed was about twelve knots, and that he was still advancing to the north-east.

Therefore I was enabled to adopt the strategy of directing my main strength, at about 2 p.m., towards Okinoshima with the object of attacking the head of his left column. The main squadron,¹ the armoured cruiser squadron,² the Uriu section, and the various destroyer sections, at noon reached a point about ten nautical miles north of Okinoshima, whence, with the object of attacking the enemy's left column, they steered west, and at about 1.30 p.m. the Dewa section, the cruiser squadron, and the Togo (Captain) section, still keeping touch with the enemy, arrived one after the other and joined forces. At 1.45 p.m. we sighted the enemy for the first time at a distance of several miles south on our port bow. As had been expected, his

¹ Under Togo himself.

² Under Vice-Admiral Kamimura.

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right column was headed by four battleships of the *Borodino* type; his left by the *Oshyabya*, the *Sissoi Veliky*, the *Navarin*, and the *Nakhimoff*, after which came the *Nikolai I.* and the three coast defence vessels, forming another squadron. The *Jemchug* and the *Izumrud* were between the two columns, and seemed to be acting as forward scouts. In the rear, obscured by the fog, we indistinctly made out the *Oleg* and the *Aurora*, with other second and third-class cruisers, forming a squadron; while the *Dmitri Donskoi*, the *Vladimir Monomakh*, and the special service steamers were advancing in column line ahead, extending to a distance of several miles.

I now ordered the whole fleet to go into action, and at 1.55 p.m. I ran up this signal for all the ships in sight: "The fate of the Empire depends upon this event. Let every man do his utmost."

Shortly afterwards the main squadron headed southwest, and made as though it would cross the enemy's course at right angles; but at five minutes past two o'clock the squadron suddenly turned east, and bore down on the head of the enemy's column in a diagonal direction. The armoured cruiser squadron followed in the rear of the main squadron, the whole forming single column line ahead. The Dewa section, the Uriu section, the cruiser squadron, and the Togo (Captain) section, in accordance with the previously arranged plan of action, steered south to attack the rear of the enemy's column. Such, at the beginning of the battle, were the dispositions on both sides.

FIGHT OF THE MAIN SQUADRON.

The head of the enemy's column, when our main squadron bore down on it, changed its course a little to starboard, and at eight minutes past two o'clock he opened fire. We did not reply for some time, but when we came within 6,000 mètres' range we concentrated a heavy fire on two of his battleships. This seemed to

force him more than ever to the south-east, and his two columns simultaneously changed their course by degrees to the east, thus falling into irregular columns line ahead, and moving parallel to us. The *Oslyabya*, which headed the left column, was soon heavily injured, burst into a strong conflagration, and left the fighting line. The whole of the armoured cruiser squadron was now steaming behind the main squadron in line, and, the fire of both squadrons becoming more and more effective as the range decreased, the flagship *Kniaz Suvaroff* and the *Imperator Alexander III.*, which was the second in the line, burst heavily into flames and left the fighting line, so that the enemy's order became more deranged. Several of the ships following also took fire, and the smoke, carried by the westerly wind, quickly swept over the face of the sea, combining with the fog to envelop the enemy's fleet, so that our principal fighting squadrons ceased firing for a time.

On our side also the ships had suffered more or less. The *Asama* had been struck by three shells in the stern near the water-line, her steering-gear had been injured, and she was leaking badly, so that she had to leave the fighting line; but she performed temporary repairs, and was very soon able to resume her place.

Such was the state of the main fighting forces on each side at 2.45 p.m. Already the result of the battle had been decided in this interval.

Thereafter our main squadron, forcing the enemy in a southerly direction, fired on him in a leisurely manner whenever his ships could be discerned through the smoke and fog, and at 3 p.m. we were in front of his line, and shaped a nearly south-easterly course. But the enemy now suddenly headed north, and seemed about to pass northward by the rear of our line. Therefore our main squadron at once went about to port, and, with the *Nisshin* leading, steered to the north-west. The armoured cruiser squadron also, following in the main squadron's wake, changed front, and thereafter again forced the enemy southward, firing on him heavily. At

3.7 p.m. the *Jemchug* came up to the rear of the armoured cruiser squadron, but was severely injured by our fire. The *Oslyabya* also, which had already been put out of action, sank at ten minutes past three o'clock, and the *Kniaz Suvaroff*, which had been isolated, was injured more and more. She lost one of her masts and two smoke-stacks, and the whole ship, being enveloped in flame and smoke, became unmanageable, and her crew fell into confusion. The enemy's other vessels, suffering heavily, changed their course again to the east. The main squadron now altered its direction sixteen points to starboard, and, the armoured cruiser squadron following, they pursued the retreating enemy, pouring a constantly heavier fire on him, and discharging torpedoes also whenever occasion offered. Until 4.45 p.m. there was no special change in the condition of the principal fight. The enemy was constantly pressed south, and the firing continued.

What deserves to be specially recounted here is the conduct of the destroyer *Chihaya* and of the Hirose destroyer section at 3.40 p.m., as well as that of the Suzuki destroyer section at 4.45 p.m. These bravely fired torpedoes at the flagship *Suvaroff*. The result was not clear in the case of the first-named boats, but a torpedo discharged by the last-named section hit the *Suvaroff* astern on the port side, and after a time she was seen to list some 10 degrees. In those two attacks the *Shiranui*, of the Hirose section, and the *Asashio*, of the Suzuki section, being each hit once by shells from ships in the neighbourhood, fell into some danger, but both happily escaped.

At 4.40 p.m. the enemy apparently abandoned the attempt to seek an avenue of escape northward, for he headed south and seemed inclined to fly in that direction. Accordingly our chief fighting force, with the armoured cruiser squadron in advance, went in pursuit, but lost him after a time in the smoke and fog. Steaming south for about eight miles, we fired leisurely on a second-class cruiser of the enemy's and

some special service steamers which we passed on our starboard, and at 5.30 p.m. our main squadron turned northward again in search of the enemy's principal force, while the armoured cruiser squadron, proceeding to the south-west, attacked the enemy's cruisers. Thereafter until nightfall these two squadrons followed different routes and did not again sight each other.

At 5.40 p.m. the main squadron fired once upon the enemy's special service steamer *Ural*, which was near by on the port side, and at once sank her. Then as the squadron was steaming north in search of the enemy, it sighted on the port bow the remaining ships of his principal force, six in number, flying in a cluster to the north-east. Approaching at once, it steamed parallel to these and then renewed the fight, gradually emerging ahead of them and bearing down on their front. The enemy had steered north-east at first, but his course was gradually deflected to the west, and he finally pushed north-west. This fight on parallel lines continued from 6 p.m. to nightfall. The enemy suffered so heavily that his fire was much reduced, whereas our deliberate practice told more and more. A battleship of the *Alexander III.* type quickly left the fighting line and fell to the rear, and a vessel like the *Borodino*, which led the column, took fire at 6.40 p.m., and at 7.23 suddenly became enveloped in smoke and sank in an instant, the flames having probably reached her magazine. Further, the ships of the armoured cruiser squadron, which were then in the south pursuing the enemy's cruiser squadron northward, saw at 7.7 p.m. a ship like the *Borodino*, with a heavy list and in an unmanageable condition, come to the side of the *Nakhimoff*, where she turned over and went to the bottom. It was subsequently ascertained from the prisoners that this was the *Alexander III.*, and that the vessel which the main squadron saw sink was the *Borodino*.

It was now getting dusk, and our destroyer sections and torpedo sections gradually closed in on the enemy

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from the east, north and south, their preparations for attack having been already made. Therefore the main squadron ceased by degrees to press the enemy, and at 7.28 p.m., when the sun was setting, drew off to the east. I then ordered the *Tatsuta* to carry orders to the fleet that it should proceed northward and rendezvous on the following morning at the Ulneung Islands.

This ended the battle during daylight on the 27th.

FIGHT OF THE DEWA, URIU, AND TOGO (CAPTAIN) SECTIONS AND OF THE CRUISER SQUADRON.

At 2 p.m., when the order to open the fight was given, the Dewa, Uriu, and Togo sections and the cruiser squadron, separating from the main squadron, steamed back south, keeping the enemy on the port bow. In pursuance of the strategical plan already laid down, they proceeded to menace the vessels forming the enemy's rear, namely, the special service steamers and the cruisers *Oleg*, *Aurora*, *Svietlana*, *Almaz*, *Dmitri Donskoi*, and *Valdimir Monomakh*. The Dewa and Uriu sections, working together in line, reached the enemy's cruiser squadron, and steaming in a direction opposite to his course, engaged him, gradually passing round his rear and emerging on his starboard, where the attack was renewed on parallel courses. Then, taking advantage of their superior speed, these sections changed front at their own convenience, sometimes engaging the enemy on the port side, sometimes on the starboard. After thirty minutes of this fighting the enemy's rear section gradually fell into disorder, his special service steamers and warships scattering and losing their objective. At a little after 3 p.m. a vessel like the *Aurora* left the enemy's rank and approached our ships, but being severely injured by our heavy fire, she fell back. Again, at 3.40 p.m., three of the enemy's destroyers sallied out to attack us, but were repulsed without accomplishing anything.

The result of this combined attack by the Dewa

and Uriu sections was that by 4 o'clock there had been a marked development of the situation, the enemy's rear sections being thrown completely into disorder. Ships in this quarter had fallen out of their formation, all seemed to have suffered more or less injury, and some were seen to have become unmanageable.

The Uriu section, at about 4.20 p.m., seeing one of the enemy's special service steamers (probably the *Anjier*), a three-master with two smoke-stacks, which had become isolated, at once bore down on her and sank her. This section also fired heavily on another special service steamer, a four-master with one funnel (probably the *Illis*), and nearly sank her.

About this time our cruiser squadron and the Togo section arriving on the scene, joined forces with the Dewa and Uriu sections, and, all working together, pursued and attacked the enemy's disordered cruiser squadron and special service steamers. While this was in progress, four of the enemy's warships (perhaps the coast defence vessels), which had been forced back by our main squadrons, came steaming south and joined his cruiser squadron. Thus the Uriu section and our cruiser squadron became heavily engaged with these for a time at short range, and all suffered more or less, but fortunately their injuries were not serious.

Previously to this the *Kasagi*, flagship of the Dewa section, had been hit in her port bunker below the water-line. As she made water, it became necessary for her to proceed to a place where the sea was calm in order to effect temporary repairs. Rear-Admiral Dewa himself took away the *Kasagi* and *Chitose* for that purpose, and the remaining ships of his section passed under the command of Rear-Admiral Uriu. At 6 p.m. the *Kasagi* reached Aburaya Bay, and Rear-Admiral Dewa, transferring his flag to the *Chitose*, steamed out during the night, but the *Kasagi's* repairs required so much time that she was not able to take part in the pursuit the following day. The flagship *Taniwa*, of the Uriu section, also received a shell below the water-

line astern, and at about 5.10 p.m. she had to leave the fighting line and effect temporary repairs.

Alike in the north and in the south the enemy's whole fleet was now in disorder, and had fallen into a pitifully broken condition. Therefore at 5.30 p.m. our armoured cruiser squadron separated from the main squadron, and, steaming south, attacked the enemy's cruiser squadron. At the same time the enemy, forming a group, all fled north pursued by the Uriu section, the cruiser squadron, and the Togo section. On the way the enemy's battleship *Kniaz Suvaroff*, which had been left behind unmanageable, as well as his repair ship, *Kamchatka*, were sighted, and the cruiser squadron, with the Togo section, at once proceeded to destroy them. At 7.10 p.m. the *Kamchatka* was sunk, and then the Fujimoto torpedo section, which accompanied the cruiser squadron, steamed out and attacked the *Suvaroff*. She made her last resistance with a small gun astern, but was finally struck by two of our torpedoes, and went down. This was at 7.20 p.m. Very shortly afterwards our ships in this part of the field received orders to rendezvous at the Ulneung Islands, and subsequently we ceased fighting, and steamed to the north-east.

FIGHT OF THE DESTROYER AND TORPEDO SECTIONS.

The fight during the night of the 27th began immediately after the battle during the day had ceased. It was a vehement and most resolute attack by the various destroyer and torpedo sections.

From the morning of this day a strong south-west wind had raised a sea so high that the handling of small craft became very difficult. Perceiving this, I caused the torpedo section which accompanied my own squadron to take refuge in Miura Bay before the day-fighting commenced. Towards evening the wind lost some of its force, but the sea remained very high, and the state of affairs was very unfavourable for night operations by our torpedo craft. Nevertheless our destroyer sections and

torpedo sections, fearing to lose this unique occasion for combined action, all stood out before sunset, regardless of the state of the weather, and, each vying with the other to take the lead, approached the enemy. The Fujimoto destroyer section steaming from the north, the Yajima destroyer section and the Kawase torpedo section from the north-east, bore down on the enemy's main squadron, while the rear of the same squadron was approached by the Yoshijima destroyer section from the east and the Hirose destroyer section from the south-east. The Fukuda, Otaki, Aoyama, and Kawada torpedo sections, coming from the south, pursued the detached vessels of the enemy's main squadron as well as the group of cruisers on a parallel line in his left rear. Thus as night fell these torpedo craft closed in on him from three sides. Alarmed apparently by this onset, the enemy at sunset steered off to the south-west, and seems to have then changed his course again to the east. At 8.15 p.m. the night battle was commenced by the *Yajima* destroyer attacking the head of the enemy's main squadron, whereafter the various sections of torpedo craft swarmed about him from every direction, and until 11 p.m. kept up a continuous attack at close quarters. From nightfall the enemy made a desperate resistance by the aid of searchlights and the flashing of guns, but the onset overcame him, he lost his formation, and fell into confusion, his vessels scattering in all directions to avoid our onslaught. The torpedo sections pursuing, a pell-mell contest ensued, in the course of which the battleship *Sissoi Veliky* and the armoured cruisers *Admiral Nakhimoff* and *Vladimir Monomakh*, three ships at least, were struck by torpedoes, put out of action, and rendered unmanageable. On our side No. 69 of the Fukuda torpedo section, No. 34 of the Aoyama section, and No. 35 of the Kawada sections were all sunk by the enemy's shells during the action, while the destroyers *Harusame*, *Akatsuki*, *Ikazuchi*, and *Yugiri*, as well as the torpedo boats *Sagi*, No. 68 and No. 33, suffered more or less from gun-fire or from collisions, being temporarily put out of action. The

casualties also were comparatively numerous, especially in the Fukuda, Aoyama, and Kawada sections. The crews of the three torpedo boats which sank were taken off by their consorts, the *Kari*, No. 31 and No. 61.

According to statements subsequently made by prisoners, the torpedo attack that night was indescribably fierce. The torpedo craft steamed in so rapidly and so close that it was impossible to deal with them, and they came to such short range that the warship's guns could not be depressed sufficiently to aim at them.

In addition to the above the Suzuki destroyer section and other torpedo sections proceeded in other directions the same night to search for the enemy. On the 28th at 2 a.m. the Suzuki section sighted two ships steaming north at a distance of some 27 miles east-north-east of Karasaki. The section immediately gave chase and sank one of the ships. Subsequent statements by prisoners rescued from her showed her to be the battleship *Navarin*, and that she was struck by two torpedoes on each side, after which she sank in a few minutes. The other torpedo sections searched in various directions all night, but accomplished nothing.

THE FIGHT ON MAY 28.

At dawn on May 28 the fog which had prevailed since the previous day lifted. The main squadron and the armoured cruiser squadron had already reached a point some 20 miles south of the Ulneung Islands, and the other sections, as well as the various torpedo craft which had been engaged in the attack during the night, gradually and by different routes drew up towards the rendezvous. At 5.20 a.m., when I was about to form the armoured cruiser squadron into a search cordon from east to west for the purpose of cutting the enemy's line of retreat, the cruiser squadron, which was advancing northward, being then about 60 miles astern, signalled that it had sighted the enemy eastward and that several columns of smoke were observable. Shortly afterwards

this squadron approached the enemy and reported that his force consisted of four battleships—two of these were subsequently found to be coast defence vessels—and two cruisers, and that it was advancing north. Without further inquiry it became clear that these ships formed the chief body of the enemy's remaining force. Therefore our main squadron and armoured cruiser squadron put about, and, gradually heading east, barred the enemy's line of advance, while the Togo and Uriu sections, joining the cruiser squadron, contained him in rear, so that by 10.30 a.m., at a point some 18 miles south of Takeshima (the Liancourt Rocks), the enemy was completely enveloped. His force consisted of the battleships *Orel* and *Nikolai I.*, the coast defence ships *Admiral Apraxine* and *Admiral Seniavin*, and the cruiser *Izumrud*, five ships in all. Another cruiser was seen far southward, but she passed out of sight. Not only had these remnants of the enemy's fleet already sustained heavy injuries, but also they were, of course, incapable of resisting our superior force. Therefore soon after our main squadron and armoured-cruiser squadron had opened fire on them, Rear-Admiral Nebogatoff, who commanded the enemy's ships, signalled his desire to surrender with the force under him. I accepted his surrender, and as a special measure allowed the officers to retain their swords. But the cruiser *Izumrud*, previously to this surrender, had fled southward at full speed, and, breaking through Togo's section, had then steamed east. Just then the *Chitose*, which, on her way back from Aburaya Bay, had sunk one of the enemy's destroyers *en route*, reached the scene, and, immediately changing her course, gave chase to the *Izumrud*, but failed to overtake her, and she escaped north.

Previously to this the Uriu section, while on its way north at 7 a.m., sighted one of the enemy's ships in the west. Thereupon the *Otowa* and the *Niitaka*, under the command of Captain Arima, of the former cruiser, were detached to destroy her. At 9 a.m. they drew up to her, and found that she was the *Sviethana*,

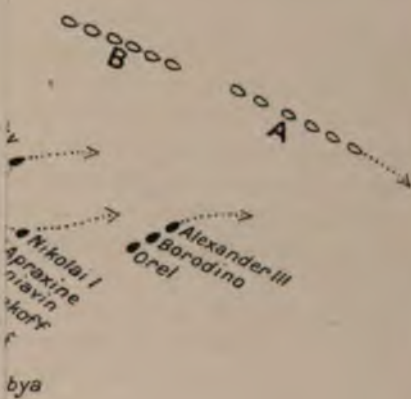
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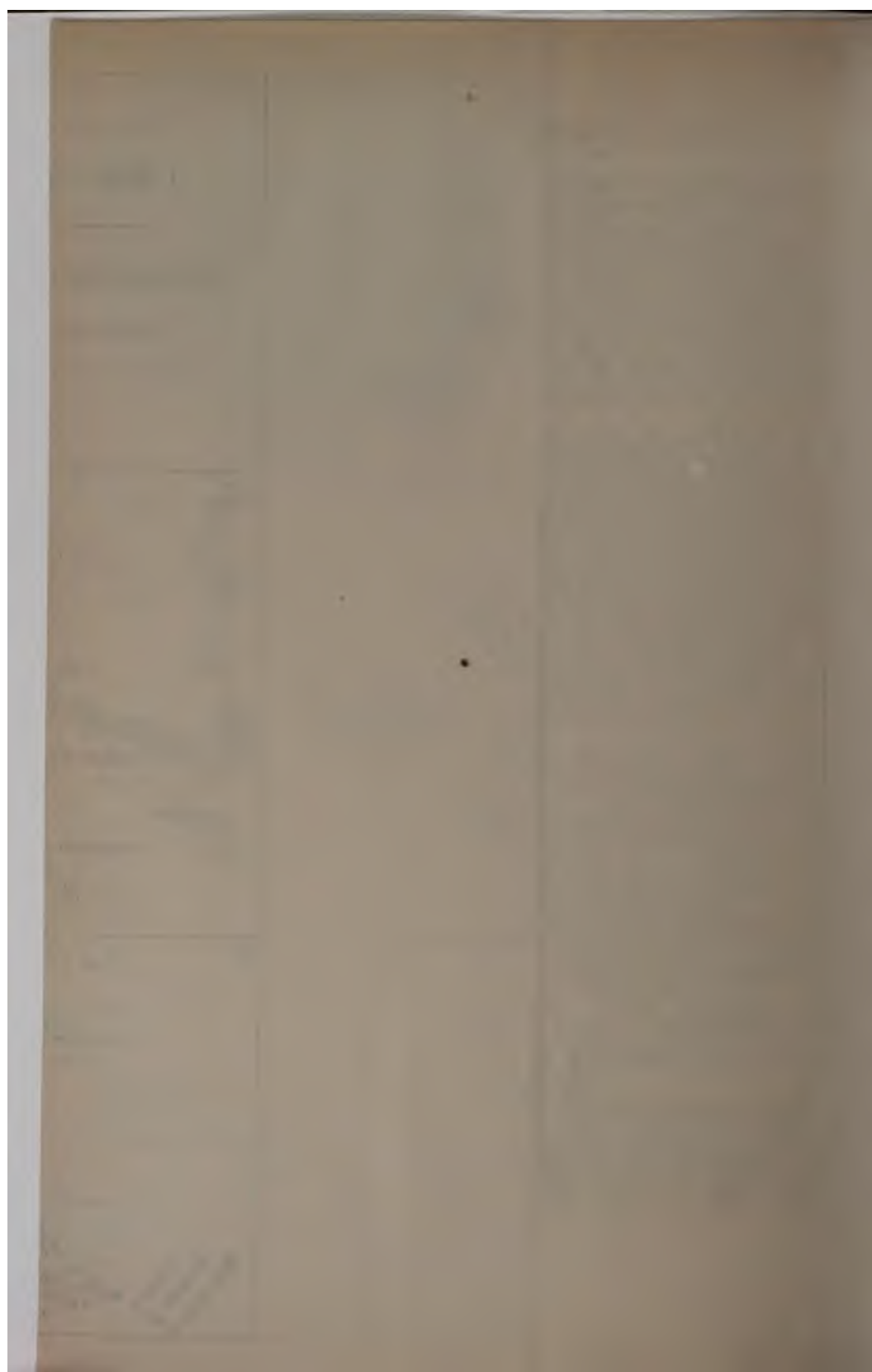
accompanied by a destroyer. Pushing closer, they opened fire, and, after about an hour's engagement, sank the *Svietlana* at 11.6 a.m. off Chyukpyong Bay. The *Niitaka*, accompanied by the destroyer *Murakumo*, which had just arrived, continued the pursuit of the enemy's destroyer *Buistri*, and at 11.50 a.m. drove it ashore and destroyed it in an unnamed bay some five miles north of Chyukpyong Bay. The survivors of these two vessels were all rescued by our special service steamers *America Maru* and *Kasuga Maru*.

The main part of our combined squadron which had received the enemy's surrender were still near the place of the surrender, and were engaged in dealing with the four captured ships, when, at 8 p.m., the enemy's vessel *Admiral Oushakoff* was sighted approaching from the south. A detachment consisting of the *Iwate* and the *Yakumo* were immediately sent after her, and at a little after 8 p.m. they overtook her, as she steamed south. They summoned her to surrender, but for reply she opened fire, and there was nothing for it but to attack her. She was finally sunk, and her survivors, over 800, were rescued.

At 8.30 p.m. the destroyers *Sazanami* and *Kagero* sighted two destroyers of the enemy escaping east, and then at a point some forty miles south-west of Ulneung Islands. These were pursued at full speed to the north-west, and being overtaken at 4.45 p.m., an action commenced. The rearmost of the two destroyers then ran up a white flag in token of surrender, whereupon the *Sazanami* immediately took possession of her. She was found to be the *Biedvi* with Vice-Admiral Rozhdestvensky and his staff on board. These with her crew were made prisoners. The *Kagero* meanwhile continued the chase of the other destroyer up to half-past six, but she finally escaped north.

At 5 p.m. the Uriu section and the Yajima destroyer section, which were searching for the enemy in a westerly direction, sighted the battleship *Dmitri Donskoi*, steaming north, and went in pursuit. Just as the Russian





vessel had reached a point some thirty miles south of the Ulneung Islands, the *Otowa* and the *Niitaka*, with the destroyers *Asagiri*, *Shirakumo*, and *Fubuki*, which were coming back from Chyukpyong Bay, bore down on her from the west and opened fire, so that she was brought between a cross cannonade from these and the Uriu section. This heavy fire from both sides was kept up until after sunset, by which time she was almost shattered, but still afloat. During the night she passed out of sight. So soon as the cruisers had ceased firing on her the *Fubuki* and the Yajima destroyer section attacked her, but the result was uncertain. On the following morning, however, she was seen drifting near the south-east coast of the Ulneung Islands, where she finally sank. Her survivors, who had landed on the islands, were taken off by the *Kasuga* and the *Fubuki*.

While the greater part of the combined squadrons were thus busily engaged in the north dealing with the results of the pursuit, there were in the south also some considerable captures of ships remaining at the scene of the action. Thus the special service steamers *Shinano Maru*, *Tainan Maru*, and *Yawata Maru*, which had set out early on the morning of the 28th charged with the duty of searching the place of the engagement, sighted the *Sissoi Veliky* at a point some thirty miles north-east of Karasaki. She had been struck by torpedoes the night before, and was now on the point of sinking. They made preparations for capturing her, and took off her crew. She went down, however, at 11.6 a.m. Again at 5.30 a.m. the destroyer *Shiranui* and the special service steamer *Sado Maru* found the *Admiral Nakhimoff* in a sinking condition some five miles east of Kotozaki in Tsushima. Thereafter they sighted the *Nladimir Monomakh* approaching the same neighbourhood with a heavy list. The *Sado Maru* took measures for capturing both these ships, but they were so greatly shattered and were making water so fast that they sunk in succession at about 10 a.m.,

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after their crews had been removed. Just then the enemy's destroyer *Gromky* came to the same neighbourhood, and suddenly steamed off northward. The destroyer *Shiranui* went in pursuit, and about 11.30 a.m. attacked her, No. 63, a unit of the torpedo-boat sections, co-operating in the attack. The enemy's fire having been silenced, the destroyer was captured and her crew were made prisoners, but her injuries were so severe that she sank at 12.43 p.m. In addition to the above, the gunboats and special service steamers of our fleet, searching the coasts in the neighbourhood after the battle, picked up not a few of the crews of the sunken ships. Including the crews of the captured vessels, the prisoners aggregated about 6,000.

The above are the results of the battle, which continued from the afternoon of the 27th till the afternoon of the 28th. Subsequently, a part of the fleet conducted a search far southwards, but not a sign was seen of any of the enemy's ships. About thirty-eight of his vessels had attempted to pass the Sea of Japan, and of these the ships that I believe to have escaped destruction or capture at our hands were limited to a few cruisers, destroyers, and special service steamers. Our own losses in the two days' fight were only three torpedo boats. Some others of our vessels sustained more or less injury, but not even one of them is incapacitated for future service. Our casualties throughout the whole fleet were 116 killed and 538 wounded, officers being included, as shown in the detailed list appended.

There was no great difference in the strengths of the opposing forces in this action, and I consider that the enemy's officers and men fought with the utmost energy and intrepidity on behalf of their country. If, nevertheless, our combined squadrons won the victory and achieved the remarkable success recorded above, it was because of the virtues of his Majesty the Emperor, not owing to any human prowess. It cannot but be

believed that the small number of our casualties was due to the protection of the spirits of the Imperial ancestors. Even our officers and men, who fought so valiantly and so stoutly, seeing these results, found no language to express their astonishment.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT.—THE ENEMY'S SHIPS AND
THEIR FATE.

I. Battleships, eight; whereof six were sunk (the *Kniaz Suvaroff*, the *Alexander III.*, the *Borodino*, the *Oslyabya*, the *Sissoi Veliky*, and the *Navarin*), and two were captured (the *Orel* and the *Nikolai I.*).

II. Cruisers, nine; whereof four were sunk (the *Admiral Nakhimoff*, the *Dmitri Donskoi*, the *Vladimir Monomakh*, and the *Svietlana*); three fled to Manila and were interned (the *Aurora*, the *Oleg*, and the *Jcmchug*); one escaped to Vladivostok (the *Almaz*), and one became a wreck in Vladimir Bay (the *Izumrud*).

III. Coast defence ships, three; whereof one was sunk (the *Admiral Oushakoff*) and two were captured (the *Admiral Apraxine* and the *Admiral Seniavin*).

Destroyers, nine; whereof four were sunk (the *Buini*, the *Buistri*, the *Gromky*, and one other); one captured (the *Byedovi*); one went down on account of her injuries when attempting to reach Shanghai (the *Blestyaschtchi*); one fled to Shanghai and was disarmed (the *Bodri*); one escaped to Vladivostok (the *Bravi*), and the fate of one is unknown.

IV. Auxiliary cruiser, one; which was sunk (the *Ural*).

V. Special service steamers, six; whereof four were sunk (the *Kamchatka*, the *Iltis*, the *Anastney*, and the *Russi*); and two fled to Shanghai, where they were interned (the *Koveu* and the *Sveri*).

VI. Hospital ships, two; which were both seized, one (the *Kastroma*) being subsequently released, and the other (the *Orel*) made prize of war.

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RECAPITULATION.

Thirty-eight ships.

Twenty sunk.

Six captured.

Two went to the bottom or were shattered while escaping.

Six disarmed and interned after flight to neutral ports.

One fate unknown.

One released after capture.

Two escaped.

CHAPTER XLIX¹

OUR WARNING FROM MANCHURIA

To those who read contemporary history with a desire to acquire for their own country the profit of the experience of others—which is, after all, the most sensible method of procedure—the story of this great campaign in Manchuria conveys one warning of wholly Imperial interest and concern; a warning at once so impressive, so serious, and so clearly defined that none but the blind should fail to observe it.

The warning of Manchuria lies in this pregnant fact, that it has given a practical illustration of the power of Russia to assemble and maintain a great army many thousands of miles from Western Russia by means of the service of a single line of railway. The precedent of the Russian concentration in Manchuria must inevitably recur in every future plan for the attack or defence of India, since it supplies definite and instructive information upon the question whether, and if so in what measure, Russia can assemble a great army far from the sources of her power, and maintain it effective for purposes of war with the aid of a single railway.

Conversely, and when we have finally determined the utmost that Russia can expect to do upon the borders of Afghanistan, we obtain the standard and the resulting policy for our armed forces that we have hitherto sought in vain, a standard by which all our

¹ Written up to date from articles in *The Times* of December 6, 1904.

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army organisation, whether at home, in India, and throughout the Empire, must in future be judged and with which it must imperatively conform.

There is no question, neither is there any need, of hypnotising ourselves with the consideration of the defence of the north-west frontier of India to the exclusion of all other aims, interests, or anxieties. Still less is there any need to discuss this matter in any spirit of hostility to the Russian Empire. All we have to consider is that, at the present moment and in all the circumstances of our present military situation, the defence of India is by far the greatest military problem before us; that it is indispensable that we should not only be able to solve this problem, but solve it successfully; and that, having accomplished this Imperial purpose, we cover ourselves completely against all minor dangers which relate to defence on land. The determination year by year of the numbers required for the successful defence of India against Russia provides the standard which must infallibly establish the whole question of Imperial defence upon a sure and stable foundation, and gives those who have the task of dealing with this great question a settled purpose and a settled policy irrespective of government or party.

Now if we consider what Russia has done during eighteen months of war, it is evident that we cannot pretend to lay down final and conclusive figures, since we shall not obtain them until the Russian official reports of the working of the Trans-Siberian Railway and its extensions east of Baikal are given to us in full. But for our present purposes we know quite enough; more, indeed, than we desire for our comfort, and ample, certainly, to point out the path we have to travel.

When the war broke out Russia was taken un-awares; she neither desired nor intended to make war, and never anticipated that it would be forced upon her. Her policy was militant and aggressive, but the material backing necessary to support her pretensions was

absent. Such things have happened to us. She had certainly not more than 150,000 men east of Baikal when the war broke out, and her failure in the first campaign was to be foreseen. After eighteen months of war, and after suffering a total gross loss of 300,000 killed, wounded and prisoners, Russia had over half a million combatants in the field, and these troops were effective for the purposes of war. Some of them were raised locally, but the average monthly reinforcement from European Russia subsequent to July, 1904, was not less than 85,000 men, with their transport, stores, ammunition, and a fair proportion of supplies.

If the greater proportion of the supplies were secured locally, it is also certain that stores and supplies aggregating about 14,000 tons a month were drawn from the West, and that the railway had to provide during the earlier months for Port Arthur and the naval squadron, and throughout the whole period for Vladivostok partially, or entirely, for the repairs and extension of the railway itself, and for the wants of the civil population so far as articles of primary necessity were concerned. If, in the early days of the war, Port Arthur received a great quantity of supplies and material of war from China and other countries, and if the Russian army itself kept open Yingkow and Vladivostok for the import of food, coal, and other requirements, it is also certain that for several months Vladivostok was the only port available for supply by way of the sea, that this door was closed early in 1905, and that, exclusive of such imports, of cattle and ponies from Mongolia, and of local supplies of certain classes of food, the Russian army, garrisons, and civil population had to rely upon the railway for everything of which they stood in need. The railway was certainly not restricted to the transport of troops and munitions of war; had this been the case the flow of reinforcements would have been greater. The maximum carrying capacity of the railway per month,

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had it been possible to restrict the traffic to troops alone, was 60,000 men.

We have already noticed that a British officer of Engineers, with some knowledge of railway work, is said to have expressed an opinion at the outbreak of war that the Trans-Siberian would break down under the strain of heavy and continuous military traffic. The railway in February, 1904, was only capable of forwarding from four to six trains a day, and, had nothing been done, the prognostication of this officer of Engineers might have been justified by the result. But much was done, and, far from breaking down, the railway steadily improved. Thousands of men and women were employed all along the line, and all the energy of Prince Khilkoff's department was thrown into the work, the national importance of which in order to secure success was realised to the full. There is no reason to doubt that from twelve to eighteen trains reached Irkutsk daily in the autumn of 1904, that the circum-Baikal line was completed concurrently with this great movement, and that the Trans-Baikal sections since the end of July, 1904, were by way of forwarding twelve pairs of trains on an average during every twenty-four hours. The Russians were however still dissatisfied, and Prince Khilkoff anticipated that by means of the provision of stronger engines and specially constructed carriages, the line would be able to supply the equivalent of twenty-one to twenty-two trains a day by September, 1905. If there is one man in Russia who has more than any other enabled his country to escape an overwhelming military disaster it is Prince Khilkoff. At the same time, he has given us a warning which we cannot neglect.

Let us now turn to the Central Asian theatre, and recall that the construction of Russian railways leading towards Afghanistan has also proceeded concurrently with the prosecution of the war in the Far East.

Before the Orenburg-Tashkent section was taken in hand Russia already possessed the line from Krasnovodsk

on the Caspian by Merv to Charjui on the Oxus, and on to Bokhara, Samarcand, Khojend, Khokand, and Andijan. From Merv a branch ran south along the Murghab to the Kushk post on the frontiers of Afghanistan, 60 miles from Herat, while another line, crossing the Syr Darya at Chinas, went north to Tashkent. In order to improve still further her railway system towards Afghanistan, Russia determined to construct the Orenburg-Tashkent section and to continue this line in order to reach the northern frontier of Afghanistan in the vicinity of Balkh. She would then have a railway base of concentration Merv-Bokhara-Khokand ; two lines of communication by rail in rear ; and two advanced feelers abutting on the Afghan frontier and serving as *têtes d'étapes de guerre*.

The work on the Orenburg-Tashkent section was begun at both ends, and has been steadily pursued during the past three years. The line from Orenburg reached the Sea of Aral in October, 1903 ; the work in the south was also pressed on vigorously, and by September 27, 1904, the last rail was laid, and the line opened to traffic shortly afterwards. The line has been expressly built to carry 12 pairs of trains in the 24 hours, the stations are 22 versts apart, and there are two sidings where trains can pass between every two stations. The railway is, without doubt, a strategic line of first-rate value, and is intended for military purposes, and for no other. Some work still remains to be done, especially in the ballasting of the line and in the construction of aqueducts, but for practical purposes the line may be taken as complete, while there is no reason to doubt that by means of the interpolation of sidings between the stations, and the provision of better rolling stock, the number of 12 trains a day could be doubled in case of need.

The concluding section, leading to the Afghan frontier at Termez on the Oxus, is under construction, and there should be no insuperable difficulty in rapid completion if only a tithe of the energy displayed in

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the Far East is expended upon the line. We have, therefore, to consider that Russia has two lines of railway, each capable of supplying a *minimum* of 12 pairs of trains a day, leading to the borders of Afghanistan. We are in presence of a new situation, and it is one which we ought to have foreseen many years ago.

It is true that no comparison can be made between Central Asia and Manchuria from the point of view of supply. The possessions of Russia in Central Asia are scarcely self-supporting, and the greater part of the supplies of an army must be brought from far away, and mainly by train. But, on the other hand, Russia can tap one of the richest districts in Russia by means of the Orenburg line, which places all Western Siberia at her disposal, while across the Caspian there can come from Southern Russia plentiful supplies. A projected line from Tomsk to Tashkent will be an additional feeder of special importance from the point of view of supply. Moreover, the average distance for troops and stores to traverse before they reach the point of assembly on the frontiers of Afghanistan is about one-third of that in the case of Manchuria. Consequently, as an operation of war and of railway traffic, the preliminary concentration can be effected with greater rapidity and ease.

That it is possible for our Headquarters or Indian Staff to make a sufficiently close approximation is certain. If, over a single line 5,000 miles long ending in a rich zone of concentration, Russia can despatch 85,000 men and 14,000 tons of stores a month, and maintain efficient 500,000 men in the field after suffering casualties amounting to 300,000 men in 18 months, how many men and tons of stores can she send over two lines, of at least equal power, ending in a poor country devoid of supplies, and what strength will be the army she can maintain at the front ?

Evidently an important factor for exact estimation is the question of supply, but upon this point no two

calculations may precisely agree. Therefore we shall only say that there is absolutely no reason why Russia should not be able to assemble in the course of a few months 500,000 men, inclusive of the army of Turkestan, at her railheads on the Afghan frontier, and maintain them there at full strength during a long war. This is a minimum estimate, and as each year goes by it is likely to be exceeded.

The military problem before us is not unlike that which Japan has solved, and solved successfully. It is no light one, but it is not beyond our power if serious statesmen take it in hand with the firm intention and will of succeeding.

CHAPTER L¹

NUNC DIMITTIS

THE sweetest canticle, says Bacon, is *nunc dimittis* when a man hath attained worthy ends and expectations. It is in the general recognition on the part of all civilised nations that the aims of Japan have been worthy, and that reasonable expectations have been followed by the attainment of all the legitimate objects for which Japan drew the sword, that the noblest triumph of Japan resides.

It was no light task that the Island Empire essayed. To beat down a navy superior, in the aggregate, in material attributes of power ; to secure free passage of intervening seas ; to land and equip a corps of siege capable of battering down one of the strongest fortresses that the wit of man has ever conceived ; to assemble, feed, direct, and maintain field armies equal to the duty of encountering and crushing the Tsar's armies ; to drive these legions into the interior ; to make it clear to the world at large that Russia could place no army in Manchuria which Japan could not defeat ; to outlast a giant enemy in a war of exhaustion ; to remain steadfast, unflinching, and united at home in face of the foreign enemy ; to restrict the area of hostilities ; to overcome the instinctive apprehensions aroused in Europe by the appearance of Japan as the champion of the Far East against the White Peril ; and finally to join moderation to valour and to enchain

¹ *The Times*, August 31, 1905.

victory to a lasting peace without loss of the sympathies of the world—that was the great task which Japan prepared to fulfil, and right splendidly has she performed it.

In eighteen months of bitter war—such war as Russia's enemies must wage or perish—Japan has utterly destroyed two Russian fleets by means of a combination of audacity and prudence reflecting undying glory upon the Japanese navy; she has taken the fortress of Port Arthur, and has driven the Russian armies from Southern Manchuria, after inflicting upon them a loss of over 850,000 killed, wounded, and prisoners. From almost every single conflict by land and sea Japan has emerged victorious, and scarce one passing gleam of triumph has shone upon the bayonets of the Tsar. It is truly a remarkable triumph, and it stands conspicuously forward as a model of its kind, not only on account of its absorbing military interest, but also by reason of the ability, prudence, and modesty with which it has been achieved.

If Japan scarcely asks us to recognise her victories or to acquaint ourselves with the leaders of her armies and her fleets, satisfied as she is that all this band of brothers are inspired by an equal sense of duty and devotion, we may still allow ourselves the pleasure, weakness though it may be, of recognising in Togo and his captains, and in Oyama, his generals and their staffs, the ideal leaders in modern war—that is to say, men prudent yet greatly daring, deliberate in council, swift in execution, doers of great deeds, yet content to rest in the shade, to sink their ambitions in the common fund of the general good, and to give not one sign or symptom that individual rivalries or desires for personal distinction or aggrandisement have any part or lot in their existence.

As for the highest, so down through all the intervening grades to the humblest private soldier or seaman, there runs one single thought of devotion to the Emperor, victory at all costs, death if need be, but even

the victory of death better than no victory at all. There has never been a nation engaged in war since legendary days which has given such signal proofs of utter immolation of self for the sake of Emperor, country, ancestors, and home. If this does not deal a mortal blow to Western egoism, then nothing will. Had there been anything in the ceaseless fighting derogatory of these high ideals, or tending to show that these exalted notions of national duty were not the part and lot of any but a few chivalrous dreamers and idealists, it is to be presumed that by this time we should have been made acquainted with the fact. But there has not been any single affirmation of the kind by any one competent to express an opinion, not even by observers hostile to Japan; and in the face of this unanimous testimony we can only say, not as a compliment but as a right, that victory has been both won and deserved by national qualities which made any other result but victory impossible.

National armies and fleets reflect, and always must reflect, the spirit of the age among the populations from whom they are recruited. It is not possible to raise, from among a people abandoned to luxury, materialism, and the cult of undisciplined individualism, armed forces endowed with all the Spartan simplicity of life, the moral strength, and the sentiment of collective self-sacrifice which distinguish the warriors of Japan. It is not possible to ask these men to submit cheerfully to the hard and continuous trials of a modern campaign against a valiant foe, unless they are absolutely possessed and saturated by a moral force of one kind or another which makes death preferable to defeat. It is not possible that the officers of such army should lead and direct the gigantic forces marshalled upon the modern battlefield with the requisite skill, intelligence, and science, unless they are properly educated, wholly devoted to their mission, and absorbed in the art and science of their profession, to the utter exclusion of all other aims, interests, and occupations.

Such as the spirit of the age is in a nation at war, such is the spirit of their armed forces ; and in national armies, wherein men pass but a brief period of their existence, the reflection of this spirit of the age is even more conspicuous than in the professional armies of the ancient stamp, which often created an artificial spirit of their own and contrived to live up to it. A nation can never justly deflect the responsibility for defeat upon the failings of its armed forces. As the nation is, so also are its government, its public services, its armies, and its fleets, and it is because the spirit of the age in Japan, from the highest to the lowest, is instinct with qualities which the West has lost, or has never possessed, that Japan has won these unparalleled triumphs, which have extorted admiration, grudging though it may be here and there, from a wondering world.

We have thought it strange, and assuredly it was unconventional, that Japanese commanders should ascribe their victories to the illustrious virtues of the Emperor of Japan. We have thought, conceivably, that this ascription of victory to the *imperatoria virtus* was little more than a polite fiction, sacrificing to courtesy what was denied to truth. But, if this has been our view, we have been mistaken. The Emperor in Japan is the heaven-descended head of a Socialistic Monarchy, the ideal to which another emperor, in another sphere, aspires rather than attains. The *ordo*, or way of the kings, is as much a living force to the Japanese monarch as *bushido*, the way of the knights, is to his subjects. This *ordo* is as much the subject of his constant and unwearied thought as *bushido* is among the *Samurai* and their disciples ; it is the subject of discourses to the Imperial ear on the part of a high dignitary of state most fitted for the task. The Emperor is the first of his people not only by reason of his birth, but because he is entirely devoted to the continual study of the interest of his country, strict in his life, and attentive to the destinies of his people

to the exclusion of all else. It is to the Emperor of Japan, first and foremost, that the world owes peace.

The virtues of the Emperor, to which commanders by land and sea continually refer, and the qualities of his ancestors, to the protection of whose spirits Admiral Togo attributes, in second line, the merits of the culminating victory at sea, are no fictions in Japanese eyes, but living realities, implicitly credited, whether we ascend or descend the hierarchic scale of armies or fleets. Whether other monarchs in other lands would patiently submit, in their maturer years, to the lectures of a professor upon the whole duty of kings, and whether they would always follow the appointed paths, even if they listened, is a subject upon which it might be *lèse-majesté* to dwell. What is certain is that Japan, from the keystone to the foundations of the arch of government, possesses binding materials of native sort which secure stability in the commonwealth such as, perhaps, no other country can boast, and that both the moral and the patriotic basis of government and people firmly established are in the hearts and heads of governors and governed.

If the proximity of Japan to the seat of war, the proved merits of her forces, and the grave disadvantages under which Russia was compelled to fight gave us a reasonable assurance, before the first shot was fired, that our ally had the game in her hands if she kept her head cool and her ambition within bounds, it is also true that the just balance between prudence and daring that has been maintained by Japanese statesmen, sailors, and soldiers alike, the tenacious valour and efficiency of both fighting services, and the unexampled constancy of the people have greatly raised the Island Empire in general esteem throughout the course of this terrible conflict. Valour, discipline, and the national spirit of self-sacrifice, crowned by all-conquering intelligence, have made Japan a Power of the first rank and a force to be respected by friend and foe. There is hardly one

Japanese, be he never so humble, who has not contributed his mite to this great result.

There is some danger lest, in the homage paid to the victor, we may lose sight of the merits of the vanquished, which are far from inconsiderable. In the eyes of those competent to judge, the Russian army has lost little in repute by the war, even if the navy has proved itself to possess nothing but valour. Russia was, from the first, confronted by a situation from which there was no issue save under the Caudine Forks. That was our view from the first, and the course of the war has not been of a nature to require us to change it. The vulgar incidence of the multiplication table is not affected by the blast of opinion. The problem of concentrating an army in East Asia, 5,000 miles from Moscow, capable of defeating an armed nation of forty-six millions of warlike and resolute people, never more than six days' journey from the scene of hostilities, was insoluble, in view of the inferiority, both absolute and relative, of the Russian communications.

The Russian Government learnt too late the true character of the contest to which they stood irretrievably committed. They set themselves resolutely to work to improve the traffic along that slender pair of rails which represented the vital artery, the umbilical cord, of the Russian army. They effected marvels, and that the Japanese failed to secure greater results earlier in the war must very largely be placed to the credit of the Russian Ministry of Ways of Communication. But if, at the close of the war, Russia had some half a million of effectives in the field in Far Eastern Asia, Japan had many more, and, had the war continued, the superiority of the Island Empire would undoubtedly have become more and more manifest and decisive, since there are limits to the number of fighting men that can be maintained effective by a single line of rail, even in a fairly rich country, and those limits Russia had probably almost reached. Meanwhile Japan, with a free sea and several alternative lines of communication from her sea-

bases to the front, stood in a position of indisputable and permanent superiority when once the wreck of Russia's naval hopes had removed all chance of future risk for the maritime communications of the Japanese armies.

Despite the fatal disadvantages under which diplomacy had engaged the Russian arms, and despite also the absence of all real enthusiasm on the part of the Tsar's subjects in the war, the grey-coated soldier from the distant steppes fought honourably and well. It is our belief that, the question of generalship aside, no other army in the world would have done better against such an enemy as Japan, and assuredly no other would have taken defeat so stiffly and have renewed the contest so stubbornly time after time. That an army should fight continuously for eighteen months without a gleam of success, lose half its men in action, and retain cohesion and stomach for fighting to the last, speaks volumes for the solidity of Russian armies, and will only fail to appeal to the intelligence of men ignorant of war.

The Russian army failed in attempting the impossible. History shows, as we remarked at the outset of the campaign, that throughout the long records of war few distant expeditions on a grand scale have succeeded, and that the majority have ended by the ruin of the army and nation embarking upon them. It is not with impunity that a nation ranges the resistless forces of nature, distance, and climate in the ranks of its foes. These forces, the natural guardians of Russia, Russia abandoned to her foe, and was overwhelmed by them. So, surely, would Japan have been overwhelmed, had she, instead of Russia, elected to fight at the extremity of 5,000 miles of a single railway and close to the heart of her enemy's power.

We shall, no doubt, be told at infinite length by the German professor of the barrack-begotten art of war—when effects are known and intelligent appreciation of events before they occur is no longer needful—that arms, or organisation, or battle-formations, or some

other subordinate causes have brought about the Russian defeat. These things are important enough in their way, but they are essentially secondary. The determining causes of the Russian defeat, other than those of a moral order, which take unquestioned pre-eminence, were the bad conditions under which Russian diplomacy elaborately prepared, and humanly speaking assured, the disasters before they occurred. As the Greeks raised a statue to Nemesis on the plain of Marathon, so might the Japanese raise another on the heights of Mukden, and dedicate it to a diplomacy that has been found out.

The Russian army gave all that it was in a condition to give, and no army can do more. If it was poorly led, if a trained staff and trained generals were conspicuous by their absence, if the regimental officers were not of the class required by modern war, if education and freedom had not breathed into any, from top to bottom, the spirit of initiative, had not cultivated their native intelligence or in any measure fitted them for immersion in the whirlpool of modern war, the fault lay not with the army itself, but with an effete and pernicious system of government resting on the twin pillars of force and superstition, which had left the mass of a great people in the slough of ignorance, and when the day of trial came demanded the attributes of freemen from the sons of serfs.

Yet Russian history may trace the earliest dawn of real emancipation from this useless, bloody, and disastrous war, since, without the exposure it has caused of the whole senseless system of government by the most unfit, Russia might have borne her chains, without hope of redemption, for another fifty years. A great war seldom leaves opinion unchanged; a disastrous war shakes the whole edifice of government from attic to basement. In the long hours of camp or bivouac men exchange ideas as nowhere else, and often with others of varying race and district and kin. Rarely does a great army return from a serious

war without containing within itself the germs of change.

When the much-enduring remnant of the Tsar's armies return to their native villages and recount the grandeur of their miseries, they will find ready listeners, and what they will have to tell will give an impetus to the cause of popular government which nothing may be able to resist. Nothing but a great and disastrous war could have brought about the immense change which has come over the spirit of the age throughout the Russian dominions during the past year, and when, in future days, an emancipated people look back to the dawn of a happier era, those patient sons of the soil who in far Manchuria seem to have won so little and lost so much may be regarded as the unconscious authors of the country's freedom, and as the harbingers of the liberties of a great people.

APPENDIX A

DIARY OF THE WAR¹

1904

- Feb. 5.—THE JAPANESE MINISTER IN ST. PETERSBURG ANNOUNCES RUPTURE OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BY ORDER OF HIS GOVERNMENT.
- Feb. 8 (evening).—Japanese squadron under Admiral Uriu, escorting transports, arrives at Chemulpo, Russian gunboat *Koriets* fires the first shot of the war.
- Feb. 8 (midnight).—ATTACK BY JAPANESE SQUADRON UNDER ADMIRAL TOGO ON PORT ARTHUR. Two Russian battleships (*Tsarevitch* and *Retvisan*) and one cruiser (*Pallada*) torpedoed.
- Feb. 9 (morning).—Naval action renewed. One Russian battleship (*Poltava*) and three cruisers (*Novik*, *Askold*, *Diana*) injured.
- NAVAL FIGHT OFF CHEMULPO. Japanese destroy Russian cruiser *Variag* and gunboat *Koriets*.
- Feb. 10.—Formal declaration of war by Japan.
- Feb. 11.—Russian mine-ship *Yenisei* blown up at 'Talienwan.
- Feb. 12.—CHINA PROCLAIMS HER NEUTRALITY. M. Pavloff, the Russian Minister, leaves Seoul.
- Feb. 14.—Attack on Port Arthur by Japanese destroyers in a snowstorm. Russian cruiser (*Boyarín*) torpedoed.
- Feb. 16.—ADMIRAL ALEXEIEFF LEAVES PORT ARTHUR FOR KHARRIN. The Japanese cruisers *Nisshin* and *Kasuga* arrive at Yokosuka.
- Feb. 17.—Admiral Makaroff appointed to supersede Admiral Starck.
- 100,000,000 yen (£10,000,000) Treasury Bonds taken up in Tokio.
- Feb. 20.—Cossacks cross the Yalu.
- Publication of Russian account of the Diplomatic Negotiations.

¹ From *The Times* of August 30, 1905.

- Feb. 21.—GENERAL KUROPATKIN APPOINTED COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Russian forces in Manchuria by Imperial ukase.
- Feb. 22.—Count Lamsdorff's Circular to the Powers.
- Feb. 23.—AGREEMENT BETWEEN JAPAN AND KOREA SIGNED AT SEOUL.
- Feb. 24 (early morning).—Japanese attempt to seal Port Arthur by sinking vessels.
- Feb. 25.—Renewed naval fighting off Port Arthur.
- Feb. 28.—Russians and Japanese in touch near Pingyang.
- Feb. 29.—The Japanese take possession of Haiyuntau, one of the Elliot Islands.
- Mar. 2.—Publication of Japan's reply to the charges contained in the Russian *communiqués* of Feb. 18 and 20.
- Mar. 6.—ADMIRAL KAMIMURA BOMBARDS VLADIVOSTOK.
- Mar. 9.—Publication of Japan's reply to Count Lamsdorff's Circular Note of Feb. 22.
- Mar. 9-10.—Japanese destroyers attack Port Arthur shortly after midnight. Russian destroyer sunk.
- Mar. 12.—General Kuropatkin leaves St. Petersburg.
- Mar. 21-22.—Bombardment of Port Arthur. Russian fleet takes up a position at the entrance of the harbour.
- Mar. 23.—Japanese and Russians in touch at Pakchen, in Korea.
- Mar. 27.—Second attempt to block the entrance to Port Arthur. Four steamers sunk.
- General Kuropatkin reaches Kharbin.
- April 6.—Japanese occupy Wiju and Russians retreat across Yalu.
- April 8 and 9.—Skirmishes on the Yalu.
- April 12.—The *Koryo Maru*, supported by Japanese torpedo vessels, lays mines outside Port Arthur.
- April 13.—Japanese destroyers cut off and sink a Russian destroyer in the vicinity of Port Arthur.
- Japanese cruisers decoy Admiral Makaroff out of Port Arthur. On the return of the Russian squadron the *Petropavlovsk* is SUNK BY A MINE, and Admiral Makaroff drowned.
- April 14.—Japanese fleet appears again off Port Arthur, but Russians remain silent.
- April 15.—*Kasuga* and *Nisshin* bombard Port Arthur by high-angle fire from Pigeon Bay.
- April 23.—Japanese advanced guard crosses the Yalu.
- April 25.—Vladivostok squadron appears suddenly off Gensan and sinks Japanese merchant steamer *Goyo Maru*.
- April 26.—Japanese transport *Kinshin Maru* sunk by two Russian torpedo boats.

- April 27.—Japanese attempt to block the channel at Port Arthur.
Fighting on the Yalu begins.
- April 29-30 and May 1.—BATTLE OF THE YALU. The First Japanese Army, under Kuroki, forces the crossing of the Yalu near Wiju, defeats Russians under Sassulitch with great slaughter, and captures 28 guns. Kiuliencheng captured by the Japanese.
- May 1.—Japanese renew their attempts to block Port Arthur by means of fire-ships.
- May 3.—PORT ARTHUR BLOCKED for battleships and cruisers.
- May 4 (morning).—Second Japanese Army sails from Chinampo.
(Evening).—Admiral Hosoya with first fleet of transports appears off Pitszewo, in Liautung Peninsula.
- May 5.—Admiral Hosoya lands Naval Brigade and a division at Pitszewo.
- May 6.—Japanese occupy Fenghwangchenn.
- May 8.—General Oku cuts the railway at Pulantien.
- May 10.—Cossacks unsuccessfully attack Anju.
- May 12.—Japanese fleet, under Admiral Kataoka, bombards Talienwan. Japanese torpedo boat sunk by a mine in Kerr Bay.
Japanese Six per Cent. Sterling Loan of £10,000,000 issued in London and New York at 98½.
- May 13.—Russian Five per Cent. External Loan of 800,000,000 fr. (£32,000,000) issued by Banque de Paris group.
- May 14.—Japanese despatch boat sunk by a mine in Kerr Bay.
Japanese occupy Pulantien.
- May 15.—Japanese cruiser *Yoshino* sunk in collision with cruiser *Kanuga*. Japanese battleship *Hatnuse* SUNK BY A MINE near Port Arthur.
- May 16.—Japanese Second Army moves on Kinchou.
- May 19.—Japanese Third Army lands at Takushan.
- May 20.—Russian cruiser *Bogatyr* runs on the rocks near Vladivostok.
- May 24.—Japanese bombard Port Arthur.
- May 27.—BATTLE OF KINCHOU: JAPANESE STORM NANSHAN AND CAPTURE 78 GUNS. Admiral Togo establishes blockade of south end of Liautung Peninsula.
- May 30.—Japanese occupy Dalny. Stackelberg's corps, despatched to relieve Port Arthur, in touch with Japanese at Wafangkau.
- June 4.—Russian gunboat sunk by a mine near Port Arthur.
- June 7.—Kuroki begins his advance.
- June 8.—Japanese occupy Siuyen and Saimatse.
- June 11.—Japanese blockade Niuchwang.

- June 14.—The Russian destroyer flotilla makes a sortie from Port Arthur, but is driven back by Togo.
- June 14-15.—**BATTLE OF TELISSU.** Japanese storm Russian position at Wafangkau. Russians retire on Kaiping with a loss of 7,000 men and 16 guns.
- June 15.—Vladivostok squadron at sea; sinks two Japanese transports, *Hitachi Maru* and the *Sado Maru*.
- June 16.—Vladivostok squadron, under Admiral Skrydloff, captures the *Allanton*, bound from Muroran to Singapore.
- June 20.—General Kuropatkin arrives at Kaiping and inspects General Stackelberg's troops.
- June 21.—Oku's army occupies Hsiungyaocheng, thirty miles north of Telissu.
- June 23.—**THE RUSSIAN FLEET MAKES A SORTIE** from Port Arthur, but is driven back again with loss by Togo. Kuropatkin takes command of the Russian army in person.
- June 26.—The two armies face to face, Russians holding the line Kaiping, Tashihchiao, Liauyang. Japanese—south of Kaiping, Lienshankuan, Saimatse. Japanese approach Port Arthur from the land side, and capture Hsitaushan and Kenshan.
- June 27.—Japanese capture three important passes, giving access to the Liau valley, Fenshuiling, Motienling, and Taling. Japanese sink two ships in Port Arthur by a torpedo attack.
- June 28.—Japanese 6th Division lands at Kerr Bay.
- June 30.—Vladivostok squadron bombards Genzan.
- July 1.—Vladivostok squadron eludes Admiral Kamimura near Tsushima.
- July 3, 4, 5.—Severe fighting at Port Arthur by land and sea. General Stössel retreats from the first of the outlying lines of defence. Japanese cruiser *Kaimon* sunk by a mine in a fog off Talienwan.
- July 4-6.—The *Peterburg* and *Smolensk*, cruisers of the Volunteer Fleet, PASS THE BOSPORUS under the commercial flag.
- July 6.—Marshal Oyama, Commander-in-Chief, leaves Tokio for the front.
- July 9.—Second Japanese Army, under General Oku, occupies Kaiping.
- July 11.—British s.s. *Menelaus* and *Crewe Hall* stopped south of Jiddah by Volunteer cruiser *Peterburg*.
- July 13.—British s.s. *Malacca* stopped by *Peterburg* in Red Sea and taken back to Suez.
- July 15.—S.s. *Prinz Heinrich* stopped by *Smolensk* and mails seized.

- July 16.—British s.s. *Hipsang* sunk by Russian destroyer in Gulf of Pechili.
- July 17.—Ineffectual attack by General Count Keller on the Motienling position.
- July 19.—S.s. *Scandia* stopped in Red Sea and taken back to Suez.
- July 20.—Vladivostok squadron passes Tsugaru Straits into the Pacific, pursued by Japanese torpedo flotilla. British Ambassador in St. Petersburg hands in a protest against the seizure of the *Malacca*, and a request for her immediate release.
- July 24.—British s.s. *Knight Commander* sunk by Vladivostok squadron off Idzu. British s.s. *Formosa* overhauled in the Red Sea and taken back to Suez. Japanese torpedo three Russian destroyers outside Port Arthur.
- July 25.—General Oku, after severe fighting, drives the Russians back from their intrenched positions on TASHIHCIAO. Japanese occupy Niuchwang.
- July 26-30.—Severe fighting at Port Arthur. Japanese capture WOLF HILL. General Stössel retreats from the second of the outlying lines of defence, and falls back towards Port Arthur.
- July 27.—Release of the *Malacca*.
- July 28.—Assassination of M. de Plehve.
- July 31.—General Japanese advance. Japanese drive Russians back all along the line, on Haicheng, Penhsiho, and Yanzuling. INVESTMENT OF PORT ARTHUR BEGUN.
- Aug. 3.—General Oku occupies Haicheng and Niuchwang town. Russians at Port Arthur driven back on to their inner lines.
- Aug. 8.—Combined land and sea attack on Port Arthur ends in capture of Takushan and Shakushan.
- Aug. 10.—SORTIE OF THE PORT ARTHUR FLEET. Admiral Togo attacks and disposes of them, seriously damaging five battleships. Admiral Vithöft killed. Some Russian vessels take refuge in the neutral ports of Shanghai, Chifu, and Tsingtau, but the majority are driven back into Port Arthur.
- Aug. 11.—A Russian destroyer stranded twenty miles east of Weihaiwei. Lord Lansdowne makes a statement in the House of Lords with regard to contraband.
- Aug. 12.—BIRTH OF THE TSAREVITCH. Japanese board and capture Russian destroyer *Rchitelni* in Chifu Harbour.
- Aug. 13.—Admiral Rozhdestvensky assumes command of Baltic Fleet.

- Aug. 14.—Admiral Kamimura engages Vladivostok squadron forty miles north-east of Tsushima and sinks cruiser *Rurik*. Japanese bombard Port Arthur.
- Aug. 16.—Russian fleet attempts another sortie from Port Arthur. Japanese send a flag of truce into Port Arthur, advising the removal of non-combatants and the surrender of the fortress. British steamers *Asia* and *Pencalenick* stopped in vicinity of Cape St. Vincent by Russian cruiser *Ural*.
- Aug. 17.—Russians refuse both Japanese proposals. British and American Ambassadors in St. Petersburg protest simultaneously against Russian decision to regard foodstuffs as contraband of war.
- Aug. 18.—The attack on Port Arthur renewed. Russian gunboat *Otvajni* sunk by a mine off Liautieshan.
- Aug. 19.—Japanese protest against prolonged stay of *Askold* and *Grosvoi* at Shanghai.
- Aug. 19-24.—GENERAL ATTACK ON PORT ARTHUR.
- Aug. 20.—Japanese cruisers *Chitose* and *Tsushima* drive *Novik* ashore in Korsakovsk Harbour.
174-Mètre Hill captured.
- Aug. 21.—S.s. *Comedian* stopped by *Smolensk* eighty miles from East London.
- Aug. 22.—East and West Panlungshan Forts captured.
- Aug. 23.—Russian battleship *Sevastopol* damaged by a mine in Port Arthur. General Kuroki's left column commences the operations leading up to the battle of Liauyang.
- Aug. 24.—The Tsar orders the disarmament of *Askold* and *Grosvoi*.
Failure of first general attack on Port Arthur.
- Aug. 25.—Mr. Balfour receives a deputation representing the interests of British shipping.
GENERAL JAPANESE ADVANCE ON LIAUYANG BEGUN.
- Aug. 25-26.—Kuroki's centre column carries Russian position at Kungchangling. Second and Third Armies attack Anshanchan.
- Aug. 27-31.—Renewed attacks on Port Arthur.
- Aug. 28.—Russians, having lost all advanced positions, are driven in upon Liauyang. Kuroki gains right bank of Tangho, and effects junction with Second and Third Armies.
- Aug. 29-30.—Japanese cannonade Russian positions and make infantry attacks, but make no material impression on the defence.

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- Aug. 31.—Second and Third Armies resume their attack, and make progress in the direction of Hsinlitun and Shoushan.
- Sept. 1.—Russians driven out of their works at these points, and Russian right and centre fall back towards river line. First Army carries Manjayama Hill.
- Sept. 2-3.—Second and Third Armies continue their attacks.
- Sept. 3.—Kuropatkin orders a general retreat.
- Sept. 4.—Russian rearguard, after delaying Japanese for two days, finally evacuates Liauyang.
- THE JAPANESE ENTER LIAUYANG at 3 a.m.
- Sept. 4-5.—Russian army in retreat fights rearguard actions with Kuroki, who occupies Yentai Coal Mines.
- Sept. 6.—In vicinity of Zanzibar, British cruiser *Forte* conveys to the *Peterburg* and *Smolensk* the Tsar's orders to desist from interfering with neutral shipping.
- Sept. 7.—Kuropatkin arrives at Mukden.
- Sept. 13.—Vladivostok Prize Court decides to release British steamer *Calchas*, but confiscates its cargo of flour and cotton.
- Sept. 16.—Russia recognises distinction between absolute and conditional contraband.
- Sept. 18.—The Japanese armoured gunboat *Heiyei* strikes a mine and sinks.
- Sept. 19-20.—Capture of Fort Kuropatkin and the Sueiszeiing redoubts.
- Sept. 20.—Capture of Namaokayama.
- Sept. 21.—Japanese obtain a footing on 203-Mètre Hill, but are subsequently obliged to retire.
- Sept. 25.—Russian Imperial rescript appointing General Gripenberg to command Second Manchurian Army.
- Sept. 26.—Circum-Baikal Railway opened.
- Sept. 29.—New military system introduced into Japan making men who have passed into the territorial army eligible for foreign service for 17½ years.
- Oct. 2.—Publication of Kuropatkin's order of the day, declaring the Manchurian Army to be strong enough to begin a forward movement.
- Oct. 9.—Russians cross Taitse and attack the Japanese First Army.
- Oct. 10-11.—Severe fighting at Penhsihu.
- Oct. 12, 13, 14.—Heavy fighting all along the line. RUSSIANS DRIVEN BACK OVER THE SHAHO.
- Oct. 15.—BAL TIC FLEET LEAVES LIBAU.
- Oct. 16.—Japanese capture Hachimakeyama (near Ehrlungshan).

- Oct. 17.—Baltic Fleet anchors off the Danish coast.
 Oct. 18.—Baltic Fleet passes through the Great Belt.
 Oct. 20.—Baltic Fleet proceeds to the North Sea.
 Oct. 21-22.—BAL TIC FLEET AT MIDNIGHT FIRES ON HULL FISHING FLEET.
 Oct. 22.—The Supreme Prize Court at St. Petersburg releases the *Allanton*.
 Oct. 24.—Urgent representations addressed by the British to the Russian Government.
 Preliminary orders for mutual support and co-operation sent to the Mediterranean, Channel, and Home Fleets.
 Oct. 25.—The Tsar sends a message to the King expressing his extreme regret.
 Oct. 26.—Baltic Fleet arrives at Vigo.
 Japanese seize trenches on the Ehrlungshan glacis.
 Oct. 28.—Mr. Balfour, at the Southampton meeting of the National Union of Conservative Associations, announces that an International Commission of Inquiry is to be constituted in accordance with the provisions of The Hague Convention.
 Four Russian officers left behind at Vigo.
 Oct. 29.—Baltic Fleet begins to arrive at Tangier.
 Oct. 31.—Japanese gain possession of the glacis crests of Ehrlungshan, Sungshuahan, and the North Fort of East Keekwanshan.
 Nov. 2.—Sir Charles Hardinge submits the British proposals for the constitution of the Commission of Inquiry.
 Nov. 4.—Foreign Office statement on contraband.
 Nov. 5.—Russia accepts the draft proposals of Great Britain, but difficulties are subsequently raised.
 Baltic Fleet leaves Tangier.
 General Linievitch appointed to command First and General Kaulbars appointed to command Third Manchurian Army.
 Nov. 10.—Admiral Alexeieff arrives in St. Petersburg.
 Admiral Fölkersahm's division at Suda Bay.
 Nov. 12.—Admiral Rozhdestvensky at Dakar till Nov. 16.
 Nov. 14.—Japanese Six per Cent. Sterling Loan (second series) for £12,000,000 issued in London and New York at 90½.
 Nov. 15.—Board of Trade Inquiry opened at Hull.
 Nov. 16.—Russian destroyer *Rastoropni* blown up by her commander at Chifu.
 Nov. 17.—Supplementary division of the Baltic Fleet leaves Libau.

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- Nov. 24.—Admiral Fölkersahm's first division arrives at Port Said.
- Nov. 25.—ANGLO-RUSSIAN CONVENTION SIGNED IN ST. PETERSBURG.
Attention drawn to the voyage of the torpedo boat *Caroline* from the Thames to Libau.
- Nov. 26.—Confiscation of the *Cheltenham* confirmed in St. Petersburg.
Rozhdestvensky at Gaboon (French Congo).
- Nov. 27.—Fölkersahm's division leaves Suez.
- Nov. 28.—Letter published from Lord Lansdowne to the Chamber of Shipping, setting forth the view of the Foreign Office as to the supply of British coal to the Russian Fleet.
- Nov. 30.—CAPTURE OF 203-METRE HILL. Japanese cruiser *Sai Yen* sunk by mine.
- Dec. 2.—Fölkersahm's division passes Perim.
Crews of Russian warships give trouble at Shanghai.
- Dec. 3.—Supreme Prize Court at St. Petersburg reverses decision of Vladivostok tribunal as to *Thea* (sinking of steamer now declared not to be justified) and *Arabia* (cargo of flour now declared not to be contraband).
Guns of Japanese Naval Brigade open fire on Russian ships in Port Arthur.
- Dec. 5.—The Russian Naval Headquarters Staff in St. Petersburg admits that cruiser *Aurora* was struck by Russian shells on night of October 21.
Fölkersahm's division coaling at the Musha Islands.
- Dec. 6.—Japanese occupy Akasayama.
Rozhdestvensky at Great Fish Bay.
- Dec. 11.—Rozhdestvensky at Angra Pequena.
- Dec. 12-15.—Torpedo attacks on the *Sevastopol*.
- Dec. 18.—Tungkeekwanshan Fort taken.
- Dec. 19.—Rozhdestvensky passes Cape Town.
Japanese seize the British steamer *Nigretia*, bound for Vladivostok.
- Dec. 22.—Japanese occupy Honsanyangtau, near Pigeon Bay.
Japanese squadron reported off Singapore.
Commission of Inquiry meets in Paris, and adjourns till January 9.
- Dec. 22-25.—Japanese dislodge several Russian outposts at Port Arthur.
- Dec. 24.—Admiral Togo reduces the blockading squadron.
- Dec. 28.—Capture of Ehrlungshan.
- Dec. 31.—Capture of Sungshushan.

1905

- Jan. 1.—GENERAL STÜSSEL PROPOSES AND GENERAL NOGI ACCEPTS SURRENDER OF PORT ARTHUR.
Four Russian destroyers escape to Chifu.
ROZHDESTVENSKY ARRIVES AT ÎLE SAINTE MARIE, OFF MADAGASCAR.
- Jan. 2.—Port Arthur capitulation agreement signed.
- Jan. 3.—Fölkersahm arrives at Passandava Bay, Madagascar.
- Jan. 4.—Itszshan and other forts delivered to Japanese as guarantee of capitulation.
- Jan. 5.—Meeting of Nogi and Stüssel.
Official report by General Nogi, reckoning the surrendered garrison at 32,207 prisoners and over 15,000 sick and wounded.
- Jan. 6.—Prisoners march out of Port Arthur.
- Jan. 8.—Supplementary division of Baltic Fleet leaves Suda Bay.
- Jan. 9.—International Commission of Inquiry into North Sea incident resumes its sittings.
- Jan. 10.—Supplementary Squadron of Baltic Fleet (Admiral Botrovosky) at Port Said.
- Jan. 11-12.—GENERAL MISHCHENKO MAKES A RAID to the south, attacks old Niuchwang and cuts line, but is forced to retire.
- Jan. 12.—£15,795,000 of a Russian Four-and-a-Half per Cent. Loan of 500,000,000 marks (£25,000,000) issued in Berlin. Remainder was to be issued later; believed to be now placed.
General Nogi announces capture of 546 guns and 82,670 rounds of gun ammunition at Port Arthur.
- Jan. 13.—Baltic Fleet at Diego Suarez.
Admiral Botrovosky's squadron leaves Suez.
Russian Circular Note presented to Powers, protesting against alleged infractions of Chinese neutrality.
- Jan. 18.—Admiral Botrovosky's squadron at Jibuti.
- Jan. 19.—FIRST PUBLIC SITTING OF COMMISSION OF INQUIRY in Paris.
- Jan. 22.—STRIKE RIOTS IN ST. PETERSBURG. TROOPS FIRE ON POPULACE.
- Jan. 25-29.—BATTLE OF HEIKAUTAI. Russians cross the Hunho and attack Japanese left wing. Heavy fighting, at the conclusion of which Russians are forced to retire. Japanese losses, 9,000 killed and wounded. Russian losses over 10,000.

- Jan. 31.—Japanese statement published in reply to Russian Circular respecting alleged infractions of Chinese neutrality.
- Feb. 7.—British steamer *Eastry*, for Vladivostok, with coal, captured off Hokkaido by Japanese (first of a series of similar captures).
- Feb. 15.—Third Baltic Squadron (Admiral Nebogatoff) leaves Libau.
- Feb. 23.—Kawamura's army (Eastern sector) opens the BATTLE OF MUKDEN.
- Feb. 24.—Kuroki's army (East Central sector) begins to operate.
- Feb. 26.—Report of NORTH SEA INQUIRY COMMISSION published.
- Feb. 27.—Nodzu's army (Central sector) begins three days' cannonade of the Russian positions.
- Feb. 28.—Oku's army (West Central sector) begins to advance. Kawamura's army occupies Machuntun.
- Mar. 1.—Nogi's army (West sector) enters Hsinmintun.
- Mar. 2-6.—Nodzu's army dislodges Russians from outworks south of the Shaho.
- Mar. 5.—Kuroki's army forces the left of the Russian intrenchments on the Shaho.
- Mar. 6.—Oku's progress checked by the Russians.
- Mar. 7.—Kuropatkin orders a retreat.
- Mar. 8.—Nogi cuts the railway north of Mukden.
- Mar. 10.—Kawamura's army carries Fushun position.
JAPANESE ENTER MUKDEN.
- Mar. 16.—JAPANESE ENTER TIELING.
- Mar. 17.—KUROPATKIN is relieved of his command, and succeeded by LINEVITCH.
BAL TIC FLEET LEAVES NOSSI BÉ.
- Mar. 19.—Japanese occupy Kaiyuen.
- Mar. 20.—Russia, having failed to raise a new loan in France, announces a new internal loan of 200,000,000 roubles. Kuropatkin assumes command of First Army under Linevitch.
- Mar. 21.—JAPANESE OCCUPY CHANGTUFU.
- Mar. 24.—Admiral Nebogatoff at Port Said.
- Mar. 29.—New Japanese $4\frac{1}{2}$ per Cent. Sterling Loan of £30,000,000 offered for subscription in London and New York.
- April 2.—Japanese driven out of Hishinkau, 33 miles north-east of Kaiyuen.
- April 3-4.—Russian force driven out of Tsulushu, 20 miles north of Changtu.
- April 8.—Baltic Fleet sighted off Singapore.
- April 12.—Russian force defeated at Erhlohu by Japanese advancing on Hailung line.

- April 12-14.—ROZHDESTVENSKY ARRIVES IN KAMRANH BAY.
 April 14.—Japanese occupy Yingching.
 April 15.—Japanese occupy Tunghwa, 50 miles east of Shingking.
 April 18.—Growing indignation in Japan at reported violations of French neutrality.
 April 20.—Japanese Minister in Paris calls M. Delcassé's attention to the reported stay of Russian vessels in Kamranh Bay. M. Delcassé tenders his resignation.
 April 21.—Statement by M. Rouvier that the French Government meant absolutely to respect neutrality between the belligerents, and had given precise orders to all its agents in the Far East.
 April 22.—M. Delcassé's resignation withdrawn. Rozhdestvensky leaves Kamranh Bay.
 April 24.—Russian attack on Changtu and Kaiyuen repulsed. Rozhdestvensky returns to Kamranh Bay.
 April 26.—Rozhdestvensky again leaves Kamranh Bay.
 April 27.—Nebogatoff reported off Penang.
 May 1.—Japanese reach Tiao-yutai, 28 miles north of Tunghwa. United States Government urges upon China the advisability of enforcing, so far as possible, the neutrality of Chinese harbours. Russian Fleet at Port Dayet, 40 miles north of Kamranh Bay.
 May 2.—Russian Fleet reported at Honkohe Bay.
 May 4.—Japanese Minister in Paris asks for explanation concerning news received by his government as to violation of neutrality in Indo-Chinese waters.
 May 5.—Four Russian torpedo boats burn a Japanese sailing vessel off Hokkaido. Nebogatoff passes Singapore.
 May 8.—Publication of French semi-official Note denying charges of breach of neutrality.
 May 9.—Rozhdestvensky leaves Honkohe Bay. Nebogatoff off Cape St. James. Two Russian cruisers sighted off Aomori, on the north coast of Nippon. Russians repulsed at Yingpienmun.
 May 12.—Rozhdestvensky returns to Honkohe Bay.
 May 13.—Martial law proclaimed throughout Formosa.
 May 14.—The Baltic Fleet leaves Honkohe Bay for the north.
 May 15.—The Japanese Government vetoes the export of coal to Indo-China.
 May 17.—Admiral Birileff appointed to the command of the naval forces in the Pacific.

- May 18 and following days.—Desultory fighting in Manchuria. Japanese successes.
- May 27-28.—Baltic Fleet drawing up to TSUSHIMA is sighted by the Japanese. BATTLE OF THE SEA OF JAPAN begins at about 2 p.m. on May 27. On that day and the next TOGO DESTROYS THE BALTIC FLEET, CAPTURES ROZHDESTVENSKY AND NEBOGATOFF, AND TAKES 8,000 PRISONERS.
- June 5.—British steamer *St. Kilda* sunk by Russian cruiser *Dnieper*.
British steamer *Ikhona* sunk by Russian cruiser *Terek*.
- June 8.—PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT SENDS IDENTIC DESPATCH TO JAPANESE AND RUSSIAN GOVERNMENTS URGING THEM TO NEGOTIATE FOR PEACE.
- June 9.—Escaped Russian cruisers are interned at Manila.
- June 10.—Japan accepts President Roosevelt's suggestion.
- June 14.—Russia signifies that she has no objection in principle to meeting of Plenipotentiaries.
- June 15.—Washington chosen as place of meeting for the Conference.
- June 16.—Fighting in Manchuria; Russian cavalry routed.
- June 19.—Further fighting in Manchuria.
- June 23.—Instructions issued to captains of Russian cruisers ordering them to abstain from sinking neutral ships.
- June 24.—The cruiser *Bayan* refloated at Port Arthur.
- June 26.—Arrival of Prince and Princess Arisugawa in London.
- June 30.—Russian battleship *Peresviet* floated at Port Arthur.
- July 2.—Baron Komura and Mr. Takahira appointed Japanese Plenipotentiaries; M. Muravieff and Baron Rosen for Russia.
Japanese successes in North-Eastern Korea.
- July 3.—Mr. Takahashi announces new Japanese Loan of £30,000,000.
- July 7.—Japanese squadron appears off Sakhalin.
- July 8.—Japanese landing-force occupies Korsakovsk.
- July 10.—Japanese occupy Vladimorovka.
- July 11.—Departure of Prince and Princess Arisugawa.
- July 12.—Issue of new Japanese £30,000,000 Sterling Loan.
- July 13.—M. Witte appointed Russian Plenipotentiary in place of M. Muravieff.
- July 20.—Baron Komura arrives in America.
- July 23.—Meeting of Tsar and German Emperor at Bjerkoe.
- July 24.—Russians dislodged in Northern Korea. Japanese land in Castries Bay on Siberian coast.
- July 27.—Japanese occupy Luikoff in Sakhalin.

- July 31.—General Liapunoff surrenders to Japanese, who effect complete occupation of Sakhalin.
- Aug. 2.—M. Witte lands in America.
- Aug. 3.—Portsmouth (New Hampshire) appointed as place of meeting for Conference.
- Aug. 5.—Reception of Japanese and Russian delegates by President Roosevelt at Oyster Bay.
- Aug. 8.—Arrival of Japanese and Russian delegates at Portsmouth (New Hampshire).
- Aug. 9.—FIRST SESSION OF PEACE CONFERENCE. Credentials presented.
- Aug. 10.—Japanese terms presented. Sitting adjourned.
- Aug. 13.—Sitting resumed. Russian reply presented.
Russian cruiser *Pallada* raised at Port Arthur.
- Aug. 14.—Discussion of less contentious points.
- Aug. 15.—Five points settled.
- Aug. 16-17.—Further discussion of terms. Serious divergence of views upon questions of indemnity and Sakhalin becomes evident.
- Aug. 18.—Conference adjourns till August 22.
Tsar issues decree granting Russia a Constitution.
- Aug. 19.—Interview between Mr. Roosevelt and Baron Rosen.
- Aug. 22.—Conference further adjourned till August 23.
- Aug. 23.—Four protocols signed. New Japanese proposals relating to the indemnity and Sakhalin presented.
Mr. Meyer, American Ambassador at St. Petersburg, has an audience of the Tsar.
Conference adjourns till August 26.
- Aug. 26.—The Tsar, in a final reply to President Roosevelt, sent through the American Ambassador at St. Petersburg, refuses to entertain the demand for an indemnity.
Conference resumed. The Russians having no proposals to make, Baron Komura suggests adjournment till August 28.
- Aug. 27.—Mr. Takahira asks for a further adjournment, to which M. Witte agrees.
- Aug. 29.—CONFERENCE ARRIVE AT COMPLETE ACCORD ON ALL QUESTIONS, JAPAN WAIVING CLAIM TO INDEMNITY.

APPENDIX B

ORDRE DE BATAILLE OF THE ARMIES IN MANCHURIA.—JUNE 1905

A. THE RUSSIAN FORCES

THE following *Ordre de Bataille* is based upon tables published by *Streffleur's Österreichische Militärische Zeitschrift* for January 1905, but, as many changes have occurred since that date, it has been necessary to take count of the *prikazes*, circulars, and other official orders issued from time to time, and to check the names of all commanders and the units under them from Russian sources, notably the *Kratkoe Rospisanie Sukoputnik Voisk*, or abridged Russian Army List, for last month. Absolute accuracy cannot be guaranteed, but the details are as complete as the nature of the case admits:—

Commander-in-Chief . . .	General Linievitch
Chief of the General Staff . . .	Lieutenant-General Kharkevitch
First Manchurian Army . . .	General Kuropatkin
Second Manchurian Army . . .	General Kaulbars
Third Manchurian Army . . .	General Batianoff

(a) SIBERIAN ARMY CORPS

1st SIBERIAN ARMY CORPS

Commander	(Successor to General Baron Stackelberg)
Chief-of-Staff	Major-General von der Brinken
1st East Siberian Rifle Division	
Commander	Major-General Sidorin
1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Bovbor-Musnitsky	Major-General (?)
1st Infantry Regiment	3rd Infantry Regiment
2nd Infantry Regiment	4th Infantry Regiment
Machine-gun company	
1st East Siberian Rifle Artillery Brigade (Luchkovsky)	
9th East Siberian Rifle Division	
Commander	Major-General Kondratovitch
1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Krause	Major-General Sichevsky
33rd Infantry Regiment	35th Infantry Regiment
34th Infantry Regiment	36th Infantry Regiment
Machine-gun company	

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9th East Siberian Rifle Artillery Brigade (Mrosovsky)

1st East Siberian Sapper Battalion

Total : 24 battalions, 2 machine-gun companies, 8 batteries, and 6 technical companies.

2ND SIBERIAN ARMY CORPS

Commander Lieutenant-General Sassulitch

Chief-of-Staff Major-General Papengut

5th East Siberian Rifle Division

Commander (?)

1st Brigade

Major-General Okulitch

17th Infantry Regiment

18th Infantry Regiment

2nd Brigade

Major-General Bachinsky

19th Infantry Regiment

20th Infantry Regiment

Machine-gun company

5th East Siberian Rifle Artillery Brigade (de Bruix)

1st Siberian Reserve Infantry Division

Commander Major-General Morosoff

1st Brigade

Major-General (?)

1st Strietinsk Infantry Regiment

2nd Chitinsk Infantry Regiment

2nd Brigade

Major-General Istomin

3rd Nerchinsk Infantry Regiment

4th Verchniudinsk Infantry Regiment

1st Siberian Reserve Artillery Brigade (Vevern)

2nd East Siberian Sapper Battalion

Total : 23 battalions, 1 machine-gun company, 8 batteries, 6 technical companies.

3RD SIBERIAN ARMY CORPS

Commander Lieutenant-General Alexeieff

Chief-of-Staff (?)

3rd East Siberian Rifle Division

Commander Major-General Kashtalinsky

1st Brigade

Major-General Mardanoff

9th Infantry Regiment

10th Infantry Regiment

2nd Brigade

Major-General (?)

11th Infantry Regiment

12th Infantry Regiment

Machine-gun company

3rd East Siberian Rifle Artillery Brigade (Schwerin)

6th East Siberian Rifle Division

Commander Major-General Daniloff

1st Brigade

Major-General Lassky

21st Infantry Regiment

22nd Infantry Regiment

2nd Brigade

Major-General Krichinsky

23rd Infantry Regiment

24th Infantry Regiment

Machine-gun company

6th East Siberian Rifle Artillery Brigade (Meister)

3rd East Siberian Sapper Battalion

Total : 24 battalions, 2 machine gun-companies, 8 batteries, 6 technical companies.

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4TH SIBERIAN ARMY CORPS

Commander	Lieutenant-General Zarubaieff
Chief-of-Staff	Major-General Vebel
2nd Siberian Reserve Infantry Division	
Commander	Major-General Levestan
1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General (?)	Major-General (?)
5th Infantry Regiment	7th Infantry Regiment
6th Infantry Regiment	8th Infantry Regiment
1st and 2nd Siberian Reserve Artillery Divisions	
3rd Siberian Reserve Infantry Division	
Commander	Major-General Polkovnikoff
1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Shileiko	Major-General Zaiouchkovsky
9th Infantry Regiment	11th Infantry Regiment
10th Infantry Regiment	12th Infantry Regiment
3rd and 4th Siberian Reserve Artillery Divisions	
6th and 9th Siberian Cossack Regiments	
4th East Siberian Sapper Battalion	
Total : 32 battalions, 12 squadrons, 8 batteries, 3 technical companies.	

5TH SIBERIAN ARMY CORPS

Commander	Lieutenant-General Dembovsky
Chief-of-Staff	Major-General Stavrovitch
54th Reserve Infantry Division	
Commander	Major-General Artamonoff
1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Peteroff	Major-General Lissovsky
213th Infantry Regiment	215th Infantry Regiment
214th Infantry Regiment	216th Infantry Regiment
26th Field Artillery Brigade (Aleieff)	
71st Reserve Infantry Division	
Commander	Major-General Ekk
1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Pogoretzky	Major-General Nudjevsky
281st Infantry Regiment	283rd Infantry Regiment
282nd Infantry Regiment	284th Infantry Regiment
28th Field Artillery Brigade (Putintsev)	
1st Argunsk Trans-Baikal Cossack Regiment	
5th East Siberian Sapper Battalion	
Total : 32 battalions, 6 squadrons, 12 batteries, 3 technical companies.	

6TH SIBERIAN ARMY CORPS

Commander	Lieutenant-General Soboleff
Chief-of-Staff	Major-General Postovsky
55th Reserve Infantry Division	
Commander	Lieutenant-General Laiming
1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Frankovsky	Major-General Dobrovolsky
217th Infantry Regiment	219th Infantry Regiment
218th Infantry Regiment	220th Infantry Regiment

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6th Field Artillery Brigade (Sergneff)
 72nd Reserve Infantry Division
 Commander . . . Lieutenant-General Tugan-Mirza-Baranovsky

1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Bolotoff	Major-General Kusoff
285th Infantry Regiment	287th Infantry Regiment
286th Infantry Regiment	288th Infantry Regiment

10th Field Artillery Brigade (Radkevitch)
 10th Orenburg Cossack Regiment
 6th East Siberian Sapper Battalion
 Total: 32 battalions, 6 squadrons, 12 batteries, 3 technical companies.

(b) EUROPEAN ARMY CORPS

1ST ARMY CORPS

Commander . . . General Baron Meyendorff
 Chief-of-Staff . . . Major-General Stolitsa

22nd Infantry Division
 Commander . . . Lieutenant-General Kutnevitch

1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Novikoff	Major-General Danitschuk
85th Infantry Regiment	87th Infantry Regiment
86th Infantry Regiment	88th Infantry Regiment

7th Field Artillery Brigade (Teodorovitch)
 37th Infantry Division
 Commander . . . Lieutenant-General Selivanoff

1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Mandreika	Major-General Polzikoff
145th Infantry Regiment	147th Infantry Regiment
146th Infantry Regiment	148th Infantry Regiment

43rd Field Artillery Brigade (Kochanoff)
 1st Sapper Battalion
 Total: 32 battalions, 12 batteries, 4 technical companies.

4TH ARMY CORPS

Commander . . . General Masloff
 Chief-of-Staff . . . Major-General Klembovsky

30th Infantry Division
 Commander . . . Lieutenant-General Shevtsoff

1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Jurgens	Major-General Vsevolojsky
117th Infantry Regiment	119th Infantry Regiment
118th Infantry Regiment	120th Infantry Regiment

Machine-gun company
 30th Field Artillery Brigade (Polikarpoff)
 40th Infantry Division
 Commander . . . Lieutenant-General Sokolovsky

1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Perlik	Major-General Modl
157th Infantry Regiment	159th Infantry Regiment
158th Infantry Regiment	160th Infantry Regiment

Machine-gun company

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16th Field Artillery Brigade (Bulatoff)

2nd Sapper Battalion

Detachment 2nd Engineer Field Park

Total : 32 battalions, 2 machine-gun companies, 12 batteries, 6 technical companies.

8TH ARMY CORPS

Commander Lieutenant-General Skugarevsky

Chief-of-Staff. . . . Major-General Martos

14th Infantry Division

Commander Major-General Rusanoff

1st Brigade

Major-General Glieboff

53rd Infantry Regiment

54th Infantry Regiment

2nd Brigade

Major-General Hahnenfeld

55th Infantry Regiment

56th Infantry Regiment

Machine-gun company

41st Field Artillery Brigade (Mingin)

15th Infantry Division

Commander Major-General Ivanoff

1st Brigade

Major-General Nekrasoff

57th Infantry Regiment

58th Infantry Regiment

2nd Brigade

Major-General Golembatovsky

59th Infantry Regiment

60th Infantry Regiment

Machine-gun company

29th Field Artillery Brigade (Bazarevsky)

12th Sapper Battalion

Total : 32 battalions, 2 machine-gun companies, 12 batteries, 4 technical companies.

10TH ARMY CORPS

Commander Lieutenant-General Teerpitzky

Chief-of-Staff. . . . Major-General Markoff

9th Infantry Division

Commander Major-General Hörschelmann

1st Brigade

Major-General Zhadonovsky

33rd Infantry Regiment

34th Infantry Regiment

2nd Brigade

Major-General Shatilov

35th Infantry Regiment

36th Infantry Regiment

9th Field Artillery Brigade (Suchinsky)

31st Infantry Division

Commander Major-General Vasilieff

1st Brigade

Major-General Rjesniiovetsky

121st Infantry Regiment

122nd Infantry Regiment

2nd Brigade

Major-General (?)

123rd Infantry Regiment

124th Infantry Regiment

31st Field Artillery Brigade (Kossinsky)

1st Orenburg Cossack Regiment

6th Sapper Battalion

Total : 32 battalions, 6 squadrons, 14 batteries, 4 technical companies.

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16TH ARMY CORPS

Commander Lieutenant-General Topornin
Chief-of-Staff. . . . Major-General Garnak

25th Infantry Division

Commander Lieutenant-General Pnevsky

1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Klei	Major-General (P)
97th Infantry Regiment	99th Infantry Regiment
98th Infantry Regiment	100th Infantry Regiment

Machine-gun company

25th Field Artillery Brigade (Pototzky)

41st Infantry Division

Commander Lieutenant-General Birger

1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Elliott	Major-General Fleischer
161st Infantry Regiment	163rd Infantry Regiment
162nd Infantry Regiment	164th Infantry Regiment

Machine-gun company

45th Field Artillery Brigade (Bandrovsky)

16th Sapper Battalion

Detachment 2nd Engineer Field Park

Total : 32 battalions, 2 machine-gun companies, 12 batteries, 6 technical companies.

17TH ARMY CORPS

Commander General Baron von Bilderling
Chief-of-Staff. . . . Major-General Baron Tisenhausen

3rd Infantry Division

Commander (?)

1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General De Witte	Major-General Jakubinsky
9th Infantry Regiment	11th Infantry Regiment
10th Infantry Regiment	12th Infantry Regiment

3rd Field Artillery Brigade (Gribunin)

35th Infantry Division

Commander Lieutenant-General Dobrjinsky

1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Gilinsky	Major-General Glasko
137th Infantry Regiment	139th Infantry Regiment
138th Infantry Regiment	140th Infantry Regiment

35th Field Artillery Brigade (Terpilovsky)

17th Sapper Battalion

Engineer Park

Total : 32 battalions, 14 batteries, 6 technical companies.

(c) EUROPEAN RIFLE BRIGADES

Commander of Rifle Corps . Lieutenant-General Kutnievitch

Chief-of-Staff. . . . Major-General Richter

1st Rifle Brigade (Dombrovsky) 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Rifle Regiments
and 1st Rifle Artillery Division.

2nd Rifle Brigade (Petroff) 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th Rifle Regiments and 2nd Rifle Artillery Division.

3rd Rifle Brigade (Sollugub) 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th Rifle Regiments and 3rd Rifle Artillery Division.

4th Rifle Brigade (Putiloff) 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th Rifle Regiments and 4th Rifle Artillery Division.

5th Rifle Brigade (Churin) 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th Rifle Regiments and 5th Rifle Artillery Division.

2nd Kuban Plastun Brigade (Martinoff) 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th Plastun Battalions.

Total : 38 battalions, 15 batteries.

(d) CAVALRY DIVISIONS AND BRIGADES

4th Don Cossack Brigade

Commander Major-General Telesheff

1st Brigade

Major-General Stoyanoff

19th and 24th Regiments

2nd Brigade

Major-General Abramoff

25th and 26th Regiments

3rd Don Cossack Horse Artillery Division

Combined Cossack Division

Commander Major-General Kartseff

1st Brigade

Major-General Logvinoff

1st Ekaterinodarsky Kuban Regiment

1st Umansky Kuban Regiment

2nd Brigade

Major-General Malieshevitch

1st Kizliarvo-Terek Regiment

1st Suntjensko Terek Regiment

1st Kuban Horse Artillery Battery

2nd Terek Horse Artillery Battery

Caucasus Mounted Brigade

Commander Major-General Prince Orbeliani

2nd Daghestan Regiment

Kuban-Terek Regiment

Orenburg Cossack Division

Commander Major-General Grekoff

1st Brigade

Major-General Erdmann

9th and 10th Regiments

2nd Brigade

Major-General Tolmacheff

11th and 12th Regiments

2nd Mounted Division

11th and 20th Horse Artillery Batteries

[NOTE.—This division has apparently been broken up to supply army corps and divisional cavalry.]

Trans-Baikal Cossack Division

Commander Lieutenant-General Rennenkampf

1st Brigade

Lieutenant-General Grekoff

2nd Verkniudinsk Regiment

2nd Chitinsk Regiment

2nd Brigade

Major-General Zenkevitch

2nd Nerchinsk Regiment

2nd Argunak Regiment

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3rd and 4th Trans-Baikal Horse Artillery Batteries	
Combined Ural-Trans-Baikal Cossack Division	
Commander	Lieutenant-General Mishchenko
1st Ural Brigade	2nd Trans-Baikal Brigade
Major-General Ljubavin	Major-General Romeiko-Gurkho
4th and 5th Ural Regiments	1st Verkniudinsk Regiment
	1st Chitinsk Regiment
1st and 2nd Trans-Baikal Cossack Horse Artillery Batteries	
Siberian Cossack Division	
Commander	Major-General Samsonoff
1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Baumgarten	Major-General Prince Tumaunoff
4th and 7th Regiments	5th and 8th Regiments
2nd Independent Cavalry Brigade	
Commander	Major-General Bernoff
51st and 52nd Dragoons	

[NOTE.—Nominally allotted to 17th Army Corps.]

Total: cavalry divisions and brigades, 153 squadrons and 10 horse artillery batteries.

(e) OTHER TROOPS OF THE FIELD ARMY, UNALLOTTED OR UNCERTAIN

61st Reserve Infantry Division (Podvalnuk); 1st Brigade (Priasloff), 241st and 242nd Regiments; 2nd Brigade (?), 243rd and 244th Regiments; 40th Field Artillery Brigade (Vinogradoff).

Siberian Reserve Infantry Brigade (Masloff); 6th, 7th, 9th, and 10th Siberian Reserve Infantry Battalions; Trans-Baikal Battalions, Nos. 4, 5, and 6.

Headquarter Escort: 1 battalion, 2 squadrons, 2 sotnias.

22 mountain batteries.

4 horse mountain batteries.

11 machine-gun companies (to be attached to 1st, 10th, and 17th Army Corps and the 5 rifle brigades).

East Siberian Siege Artillery Regiment.

East Siberian Siege Artillery Park.

1st and 2nd East Siberian Howitzer Batteries.

3rd Howitzer Regiment, 4 batteries, 121 mm. (q.-f.).

4th and 5th Howitzer Regiments.

5th, 8th, 9th, and 11th Sapper Battalions.

1st and 2nd Balloon Battalions.

11 companies telegraph troops.

10 companies pontooners.

Gendarmerie, etc.

Total: 32 battalions, 46 batteries, 4 squadrons, 45 technical companies, and 11 machine-gun companies.

[NOTE.—The 4th and 7th East Siberian Rifle Divisions, captured at Port Arthur, are believed to be in course of reconstruction. A 10th East Siberian Rifle Division is also believed to be in course of formation; the two brigadiers are Major-Generals Varabioff and Rosenschild von Paulin. There is no news yet of the arrival of the three Dragoon Regiments (28th, 29th, and 30th) of the 10th Cavalry Division in the theatre of war. In Europe the 7th and 19th Army Corps are said to be mobilised. Additional machine-gun companies for the divisions still without them are to be sent east.]

SUMMARY

	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Batteries.	Machine-gun Companies.	Technical Companies.
Siberian Army Corps . . .	172	24	56	5	27
European Army Corps . . .	192	6	76	6	30
Rifle Brigades . . .	38	—	15	—	—
Cavalry Divisions and Brigades	—	153	10	—	—
Other troops . . .	32	4	46	11	45

This brings the total of the field armies to 434 battalions, 187 squadrons, 203 batteries, 22 machine-gun companies, and 102 technical companies. If we take the battalion at the regulation strength of 880 rifles, the squadron at 143 sabres, and the battery at 6 to 8 guns, according to category, with 210 men, these figures would give 381,920 rifles, 26,741 sabres, and 42,690 artillery with 1,524 guns—that is to say, 452,291 combatants, exclusive of ammunition columns; but it is well known that, owing to the heavy losses incurred throughout the war, these figures have never been reached.

(S) USSURI COMMAND

Commander General Chreshchatitzky
 Chief-of-Staff Major-General Rutkovsky

2nd East Siberian Rifle Division

Commander Major-General Anisimoff

1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Danilovitch	Major-General Shupinsky
5th Infantry Regiment	7th Infantry Regiment
6th Infantry Regiment	8th Infantry Regiment

Machine-gun company

2nd East Siberian Rifle Artillery Brigade (Zhukoff)

[NOTE.—The 5th Regiment was at Port Arthur, but has probably been reconstituted.]

8th East Siberian Rifle Division.

Commander Major-General Lashkevitch

1st Brigade	2nd Brigade
Major-General Furs-Jirkevitch	Major-General Alkalaieff-Kalageorgi
29th Infantry Regiment	31st Infantry Regiment
30th Infantry Regiment	32nd Infantry Regiment

8th East Siberian Rifle Artillery Division

Ussuri Mounted Brigade

Commander Major-General Pavloff

Pri-Amur Dragoon Regiment
 1st Nerchinsk Trans-Baikal Cossack Regiment
 Ussuri Cossack Regiment
 1st Argunsk Trans-Baikal Cossack Regiment
 Siberian Cossack Regiment
 3rd Verdniudiinsk Trans-Baikal Cossack Regiment

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Amur Cossack Regiment
Irkutsk and Krasnoïarsk Cossack Divisions

[NOTE.—Some of these Cossack regiments are probably watching the coast and Korean frontier.]

Ussuri Railway Brigade, 8 Companies

Fortress Troops

Commandant of Vladivostok . . . Lieutenant-General Kazbek.

7 battalions fortress artillery

3 companies sappers and miners

Total Ussuri Command: 31 battalions, 1 machine-gun company, 8 field batteries, 46 squadrons, 11 technical companies.

[NOTE.—These troops have been but little engaged, and must be assumed to be up to strength, say 36,000 combatants.]

(g) TROOPS ON LINE OF COMMUNICATION, ETC.

Frontier guards: 55 companies, 55 squadrons, 6 horse artillery batteries.

Reserve Battalions:

2nd Chitinsk

3rd Nerchinsk

4th Verdnudinsk

5th Irkutsk

8th Tomsk

Khabarovsk Battalion

Blagovietchensk Battalion

(All the above in garrison at the towns named)

Alexandrovsk Battalion }
Korsakovsk Battalion . } In Sakhalin

36 companies railway troops

Total: 8 battalions and 55 companies of infantry, 55 squadrons of cavalry, 6 horse artillery batteries, 36 technical companies.

GENERAL SUMMARY

	Battalions.	Batteries.	Squadrons.	Machine- gun Companies.	Technical Companies.
Field Armies . . .	434	203	187	22	102
Ussuri Command . . .	31	8	46	1	11
L. of C.	22	6	55	—	36

Total units of the Russian army at the seat of war:—487 battalions, 217 batteries, 288 squadrons, 23 machine-gun companies, and 149 technical companies.

But for losses incurred, owing to the adequate foresight and hard-fighting qualities of the Japanese, the Russian combatants would have numbered to-day 410,960 rifles, 40,881 sabres, and 1,624 guns, or 497,271 combatants in all, exclusive of officers and of ammunition columns, with a ration strength, non-combatants

included, of considerably over 600,000 men. It is desirable that those who disbelieve in, or are inclined to disparage, Russian military power and the efficiency of Russian railways should lay these facts to heart.

B. THE JAPANESE FORCES

According to the *Russki Invalid* the Russian official estimate of the Japanese army in the field is "19 divisions (of which six are newly formed) and 22 reserve brigades, of which eight are composed of 'depôt troops.' The number of battalions vary in total between 388 and 404, which gives 430,000 to 450,000 bayonets. The cavalry, without counting the reserve and depôt *cadres*, total at least 17 regiments. The 1st Army (Kuroki) forms the right wing of the Japanese front, and comprises three first-line divisions (Guard, 2nd, and 12th), four reserve brigades, and two depôt brigades. Since the battle of Mukden it is believed that the 1st Army has been reinforced by two newly formed divisions. It therefore totals from 104 to 108 battalions, equivalent to 115,000 to 120,000 bayonets. The 2nd Army (Oku) furnishes the left of the Japanese main force. It is composed of four first-line divisions (3rd, 4th, 5th, and 8th), two recently formed divisions, two reserve brigades, and two depôt brigades. The number of battalions is probably from 100 to 104; the total number of bayonets is, therefore, 110,000 to 115,000. The 3rd Army (Nogi) is somewhat detached to the left of Oku. It consists of three first-line divisions (1st, 7th, and 9th), one newly formed division, and at least one depôt brigade. This army has 76 to 80 battalions, and consequently from 85,000 to 90,000 bayonets. The 4th Army (Nodzu) forms the centre of the Japanese army. It consists of two first-line divisions (6th and 10th) and two reserve brigades, making in all 40 battalions, with 45,000 bayonets. The 5th Army (Kawamura) forms the extreme right of the Japanese line, and is composed of the 11th (first-line) division, one newly formed division, three reserve brigades, and three depôt brigades, which give from 66 to 72 battalions—i.e., 73,000 to 80,000 bayonets. In consideration of these figures and those that must be calculated for in the recent mobilisation of an army destined to operate in the Maritime Province, one finds that the Japanese forces at present at the theatre of war should reach the total of 550,000 to 600,000 men."

APPENDIX C
THE RIVAL FLEETS, MAY 1905¹
THE RUSSIAN FLEET UNDER ADMIRAL ROZHDESTVENSKY, INCLUDING REAR-ADMIRAL NEBOGATOFF'S
DIVISION

Class.	Name.	Displacement.	Date of Completion.	Speed.	Armament (Light and Machine-Guns omitted).	Crew.	Coal.
		Tons.		Knots.			Tons.
Battleship	Suvaroff . . .	13,516	1904	18.0	{ IV. 12 in. ; XII. 6 in. ; 6 torpedo tubes } (2 submerged)	740	1,250
"	Orel . . .	13,516	1904	18.0	{ IV. 12 in. ; XII. 6 in. ; 4 torpedo tubes } (2 submerged)	740	2,000 1,250
"	Imperator Alexander III.	13,516	1904	18.0	{ IV. 12 in. ; XII. 6 in. ; 6 torpedo tubes } (2 submerged)	740	2,000 1,250
"	Borodino . . .	13,516	1904	18.0	{ IV. 12 in. ; XII. 6 in. ; 6 torpedo tubes } (2 submerged)	740	2,000 1,250
"	Osl'yabya . . .	12,674	1901	18.0	IV. 10 in. ; XI. 6 in. ; 6 torpedo tubes	732	2,068 590
"	Sissoi Veliky . . .	10,400	1897	16.0	IV. 12 in. ; VI. 6 in. ; 6 "	550	500 700
"	Navarin . . .	10,206	1895	16.0	IV. 12 in. ; VIII. 6 in. ; 6 "	630	1,200
"	Imperator Nikolai I.	9,672	1892	14.8	{ II. 12 in. ; IV. 9 in. ; VIII. 6 in. ; 6 "	604	1,200

Coast Defence Ship	General Adm. Apraxine .	4,128	1898	15·0	III. 10 in. ; IV. 6 in. ;	4 torpedo tubes	318	215
" "	Admiral Oushakoff .	4,648	1896	16·0	IV. 9 in. ; IV. 6 in. ;	4 " "	318	400
" "	Admiral Seniavin .	4,792	1895	16·0	IV. 9 in. ; IV. 6 in. ;	4 " "	318	400
Armoured Cruiser	Admiral Nakhimoff .	8,524	1888	16·7	VIII. 8 in. ; X. 6 in. ;	4 " "	567	1,200
" "	Dmitri Douakoi .	6,200	1886	16·5	VI. 6 in. ; X. 4·7 in. ;	4 " "	510	1,300
" "	Vladimir Monomakh .	5,583	1885	15·2	V. 8 in. ; XII. 6 in. ;	2 " "	550	280
Protected Cruiser	Aurora .	6,731	1902	20·0	VIII. 6 in. ;	4 " "	422	400
" "	Oleg .	6,675	1904	23·0	XII. 6 in. ; 2 torpedo tubes (submerged)		340	900
" "	Izumrud .	3,106	1904	23·0	VI. 4·7 in. ;	5 torpedo tubes	340	600
" "	Jemchug .	3,106	1904	23·0	VI. 4·7 in. ;	5 " "	340	600
" "	Svietlana .	3,862	1897	20·2	VI. 5·8 in. (Canet) ;	4 " "	360	400
" "	Almaz .	3,285	1903	19·0	VI. 4·7 in. ;	6 " "	340	1,000
								560

¹ From *The Times* of May 16, 1905.

DESTROYERS.—Thirteen.

AUXILIARY CRUISERS.—Six.

VOLUNTEER FLEET.—Five. TRANSPORTS.—Ten.

One tank vessel ; one repair vessel ; two hospital ships.

NOTE.—The number "submerged" under the heading "torpedo tubes" is included in the number above it and is not additional. Two sets of figures for coal supply mean that the larger is likely to be the number of tons shipped.

It is believed that the following list of the Japanese fleet is substantially correct :

JAPANESE FLEET

Class.	Name.	Displacement.	Date of Completion.	Speed.	Armament (Light and Machine-Guns omitted).	Crew.	Coal.
		Tons.		Knots.			Tons.
Battleship .	Asahi .	15,200	1900	18·3	IV. 12 in. ; XIV. 6 in. ; 4 torpedo tubes (submerged)	796	700
" .	Fuji .	12,320	1897	18·5	IV. 12 in. ; X. 6 in. ; 5 " (4 submerged)	600	1,549
" .	Mikasa .	15,200	1902	18·5	IV. 12 in. ; XIV. 6 in. ; 4 " (submerged)	836	1,100
" .	Shikishima	14,850	1899	19·0	IV. 12 in. ; XIV. 6 in. ; 5 " (4 submerged)	810	1,520
" .	Chinyen	7,400	1884	14·2	IV. 12 in. ; IV. 6 in. ; 3 " " .	400	700
" .	Fuso .	3,717	1899	11·6	IV. 9·4 in. ; IV. 6 in.	377	1,722
Coast Defence Vessel	Adzuma .	9,436	1901	21·0	IV. 8 in. ; XII. 6 in. ; 5 torpedo tubes (4 submerged)	482	1,000
Armoured Cruiser .	Asama .	9,700	1899	22·1	IV. 8 in. ; XII. 6 in. ; 5 " (4 submerged)	500	600
" .	Idzumo .	9,750	1901	22·0	IV. 8 in. ; XIV. 6 in. ; 4 " (submerged)	500	1,409
" .	Iwate .	9,750	1901	21·7	IV. 8 in. ; XIV. 6 in. ; 4 " (submerged)	500	600
" .	Kasuga .	7,294	1904	20·0	I. 10 in. ; II. 8 in. ; XIV. 6 in. ; 4 torpedo tubes .	500	1,412
" .	Nishin .	7,294	1904	20·0	IV. 8 in. ; XIV. 6 in. ; 4 torpedo tubes	500	600
" .	Tokiwa .	9,700	1899	22·7	IV. 8 in. ; XII. 6 in. ; 5 " (4 submerged)	500	1,160
" .							600
" .							1,160
" .							600
" .							1,409

Armoured Cruiser.	Yakumo	9,850	1901	21.0	IV. 8 in. ; XII. 6 in. ; 5 torpedo tubes (4 submerged)	498	600
Protected Cruiser	Tsushima	3,365	1903	20.0	VI. 6 in.	320	1,100
"	Nitaka	3,365	1903	20.0	VI. 6 in.	320	600
"	Chitose	4,898	1899	22.7	II. 8 in. ; X. 4.7 in. ; 4 torpedo tubes	405	350
"	Kasagi	4,784	1899	22.7	II. 8 in. ; X. 4.7 in. ; 4 "	405	1,000
"	Tokasago	4,180	1898	22.5	II. 8 in. ; X. 4.7 in. ; 5 "	385	350
"	Akitsushima	3,100	1893	19.0	IV. 6 in. ; VI. 4.7 in. ; 4 "	407	1,000
"	Hashidate	4,210	1893	16.0	I. 12.6 in. (Canet) ; XI. 4.7 in. ; 4 torpedo tubes	418	500
"	Matsushima	4,210	1892	16.0	I. 12.6 in. (Canet) ; XII. 4.7 in. ; 4 "	418	400
"	Itsukushima	4,210	1893	16.0	I. 12.6 in. (Canet) ; 4 torpedo tubes	418	400
"	Naniwa	3,727	1896	18.7	VIII. 6 in. ; 4 torpedo tubes	352	350
"	Takachiho	3,727	1896	18.7	II. 10.2 in. ; VI. 5.9 in. ; 4 torpedo tubes	352	800
"	Otawa	3,000	1904	21.0	II. 6 in. ; VI. 4.7 in.	310	350
Cruiser	Suma	2,657	1898	19.5	II. 6 in. ; VI. 4.7 in. ; 2 torpedo tubes	300	800
"	Akashi	2,657	1898	19.5	II. 6 in. ; VI. 4.7 in. ; 2 "	300	600
"	Chiyoda	2,450	1890	19.0	X. 4.7 in. ; 2 torpedo tubes	306	544
"	Izumi	2,920	"	17.0	II. 6 in. ; VI. 4.7 in.	314	420
							400

¹ Reconstructed. ² Reconstructed 1901.

DESTROYERS.—(?) Twenty (some destroyers built in Japan may have been completed by this time).

TORPEDO BOATS.—Twelve large ; fifty-five small. SUMMARIES. Thirteen.

AUXILIARY CRUISERS.—Exact number in commission is not known ; but before the war the steamers on the list of auxiliaries numbered 38. The Japanese fleet, as shown by the experience of the 1904 campaign, was amply provided with fleet attendants, such as tank vessels, repairing vessels, hospital ships, etc.

NOTE.—As to the figures for torpedo tubes and coal supply, see note at foot of the list of Russian ships.

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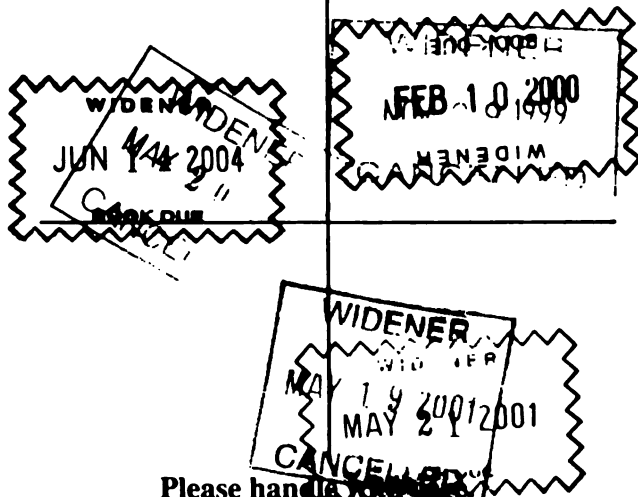
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